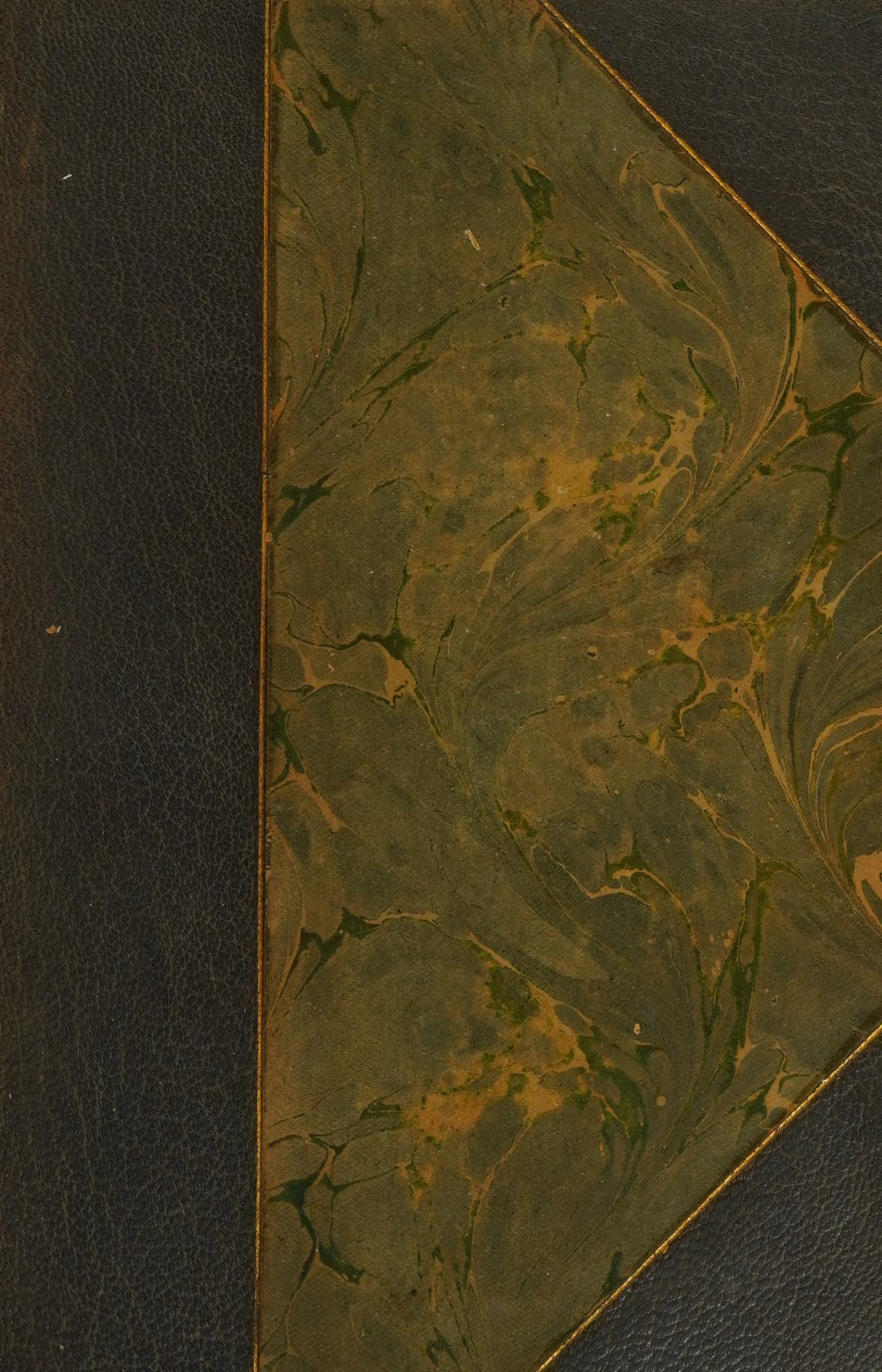
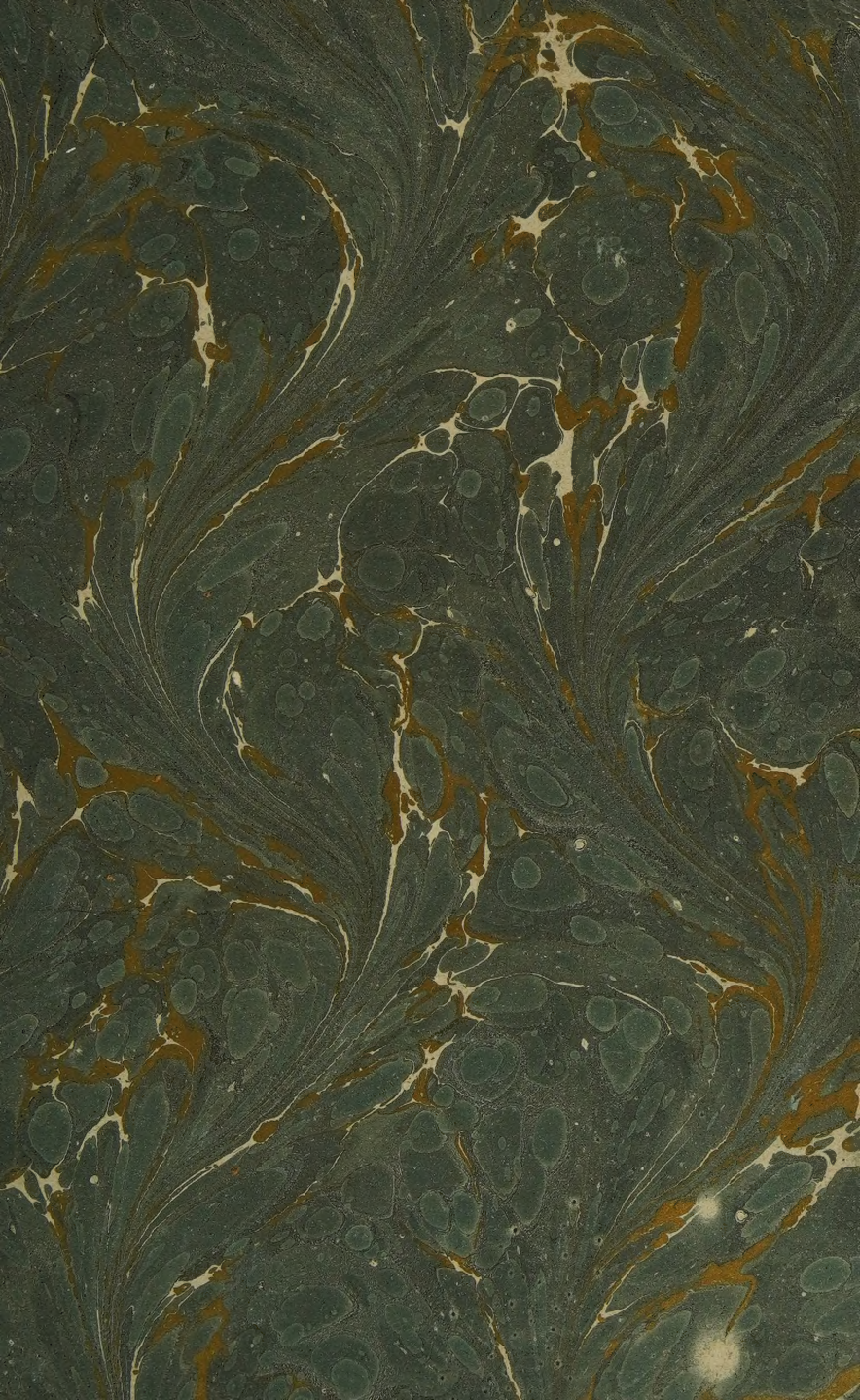








Romances of Alexandre Dumas.

D'ARTAGNAN EDITION.



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The Romances of Alexandre Dumas

D'ARTAGNAN EDITION

LA COMTESSE DE CHARNY ❀
BY ALEXANDRE DUMAS ❀ VOLUME
THREE ❀



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LA COMTESSE DE CHARNY.

CHAPTER I.

A PEASANT'S HATRED.

FINDING themselves face to face, the two men looked straight at each other, but the gaze of the nobleman did not make the farmer wince. Moreover it was Billot who first spoke.

"The Count has done me the honor to say he wishes to speak with me. I am ready to hear what he has to say."

"Billot," asked Charny, "how comes it that I meet you here, charged with such a vengeful mission? I supposed you were our friend, and a friend to other noblemen, as well as a good and faithful servant to the King."

"I was a good and faithful servant of the King. If not your friend, — an honor hardly allowable to a poor farmer like me, — I was at least your humble servant."

"Well, well?"

"Well, Monsieur, I am so no longer."

"I don't understand you, Billot!"

"Why do you seek to understand me, Monsieur? Do I demand the causes of your fidelity to the King, or of

your devotion to the Queen? No! I take for granted you have your reasons for it, and, as you are an honest and true man, that your reasons are good, — or, at least, satisfactory to your own conscience. I have not your high rank, Count, I have not your knowledge; but you know me to be an honest and true man, — or *have* known me to be so. Take for granted then that, like yourself, I have my reasons, which, if not the best, are equally conscientious."

Charny was completely ignorant of the farmer's motives for hating the nobility or royalty; so he said: "Billot, I have known you, — and not so long ago either, — when you were far different from what you are now."

"Oh, certainly, I do not deny it," said Billot, with a bitter smile. "Yes, you have known me a different man from what I am now. I'll tell you what I *was*. I was a true Patriot, devoted to two men and one object. The two men were the King and Doctor Gilbert. The one object was my country. One day the King's commissioners came, — and I own," said the farmer, shaking his head, "that this first disaffected me towards him, — well, one day the King's commissioners came to my farm. Half by force, half by their unexpected arrival, they took from me a casket, a precious trust which had been confided to me by Doctor Gilbert. As soon as I was at liberty, I started for Paris, where I arrived on the evening of the Thirteenth of July, 1789, in the very midst of the outbreak over the busts of Orléans and Necker. They were carrying these busts through the streets, and shouting their cheers for these two men. This could do the King no great harm; yet, all of a sudden, the King's soldiers charged upon us. I saw the poor devils falling around me, — fellows who had committed no other crime than shouting *hurrah*, for two men whom they probably

knew little about, and cared less. Some fell with their heads laid open by sabre-cuts, others with their breasts riddled with bullets. I saw Monsieur de Lambesq, one of the King's friends, hunt down women and children, into the very Tuileries, who had not even shouted for Necker and Orléans ; and under his horse's feet he trod an old man of seventy. This made me quarrel more and more with the King. The next day I went to the boarding-school of little Sebastien ; and from this poor child I learned that his father was in the Bastille, under an order from the King, which had been solicited by a Court lady ; and I continued to say to myself that, if the King was as good as they pretended, he had moments of awful ignorance, forgetfulness, and error in the midst of his goodness. Nay, more ! I determined, as far as in me lay, to reform the faults committed by the King in his moments of error, ignorance, and forgetfulness ; and I did all in my power to capture the Bastille. We did it, too, though not without some pains ! The King's soldiers fired on us, killing nearly two hundred men ; and this gave me new cause for not agreeing with the popular notion as to the King's wonderful goodness. However, the Bastille was taken. In one of its dungeons I found Monsieur Gilbert, for whom I had risked being killed twenty times ; but all this I forgot in my joy at seeing him. Well, Monsieur Gilbert still declared that the King was good, that he was ignorant of the greater part of the wrongs done in his name, and that it was not with him I should be angry, but with his ministers. At that time everything Monsieur Gilbert said to me was like Gospel truth. I believed him. Seeing the Bastille destroyed, Gilbert set at liberty, and Pitou and myself safe and sound, I forgot the shots in Rue Saint Honoré, the attacks on the populace at the Tuileries, the one hundred

and fifty or two hundred men killed by the Prince of Saxe's *musette*, as they called it. I forgot even the imprisonment of Doctor Gilbert, on the simple request of a Court lady. — But pardon, Monsieur," said Billot, interrupting himself, "all this does n't concern you, and you did n't ask for an interview with me to listen to all the parrotings of a poor uneducated peasant, — you, a noble lord and a learned man."

Billot made a motion as if about to unlock the door into the chamber where the King was, but Charny stopped him.

Charny had two reasons for so doing. First, it might not be unimportant, in such a situation, to ascertain the causes of Billot's enmity; and second, he should be gaining time. So he said: "No! tell me all, my dear Billot. You know the friendship we have had for you, — my poor brothers and myself, and what you say interests me in the highest degree."

At those three words, *my poor brothers*, Billot smiled bitterly.

"Very well, Monsieur le Comte, I will gratify you, — and I regret that *your two brothers* — especially *one of them, Monsieur Isidore* — are not here to listen."

Billot pronounced these words, *your two brothers*, and *one of them, Monsieur Isidore*, with so singular an emphasis, that Charny perceived the sad emotions which this beloved brother's name awakened in the farmer's heart; but without answering Billot, who was evidently ignorant of the misfortunes of the brother whose presence he desired, Charny made a sign for him to go on; and Billot did so.

"When the King set out for Paris I could only see in him a father returning to the midst of his children. I marched with Doctor Gilbert near the royal carriage,

making a rampart with my body against any attack, and shouting lustily for the King. This was his first trip, when all about him, — before him, behind him, in the street, under the feet of his horses and the wheels of his carriage, — there were benedictions and flowers. On our arrival at the Hôtel de Ville, it was noticeable that the King wore no longer a white cockade, but that he had not yet put on the tricolored cockade; so the crowd shouted, *Cockade! Cockade!* I took off the one on my hat, and offered it to him. He thanked me, and put it on his own hat, amidst the cheers of the multitude. I was intoxicated with joy, at seeing my cockade in the King's hat. Louder than all others I shouted the King's name. I became so enthusiastic for this good King, that I stayed in Paris. My crops were ripe, and needed my presence; but *bah!* What mattered the crops? I was rich enough to lose a whole harvest, and if my presence was of any use to this good King, — the Father of his People and the Restorer of French Liberty, as we were idiots enough to call him in those days, — why, it was certainly better for me to stay in Paris than to go back to Pisseleu. My harvest, which I had confided to Catherine's care, was ruined! — It appears that Catherine had something else to attend to besides the crops. — But don't let us talk about that! — Well, they began to say that the King did n't willingly accept the Revolution; that he acted under force and constraint; that it was not the tricolored cockade he wished to wear on his hat, but the white cockade. Those who said such things were partly slanderers, as was proved at the banquet held by the royal bodyguards, where the Queen put on neither the tricolored cockade nor the white cockade, — neither the National cockade nor the French, — but wore the cockade of her brother, the Emperor Joseph the

Second, — now dead and gone, — the Austrian cockade, the black cockade. Well, I acknowledge that my doubts recommenced; but Monsieur Gilbert told me it was not the King who did this, but the Queen, — that the Queen was only a woman, and we must be indulgent towards women. I believed him so truly, that when the mob came from Paris to Versailles to attack the palace, — although at the bottom of my heart I believed the assailants of the palace were not wholly in the wrong, — I sided with its defenders; so much so, that I was the first to run and rouse Lafayette, — who was asleep, poor dear man, as if he were at church, — and whom I brought to the palace in the nick of time, to save the King. Ah! On that day I saw Madame Elizabeth embrace Lafayette. I saw the Queen offer him her hand to kiss. I heard the King call Lafayette his friend; and I said to myself that Gilbert was perhaps right. Certainly it was not fear which led a king, a queen, and a royal princess to make such demonstrations; and even if they did not share Lafayette's opinions, and only valued his usefulness to themselves in a perilous moment, three such royal personages would not stoop to falsehood. Then I began to pity the poor Queen, who was only imprudent, and the poor King, who was only feeble. However, I let them return to Paris without me. — *Me?* Oh, I was busy at Versailles, — you know about what, Monsieur de Charny."

Charny only sighed.

"They say the King's second trip was not quite so gay as the first. In place of blessings, they say there were curses. Instead of *vivas* there were death-cries. Instead of bouquets, thrown under the hoofs of the horses and the carriage wheels, there were severed heads, carried on pikes. I did n't see these things, for I was still at Versailles. All this time I was leaving my farm without a

master ! *Bah !* I was rich enough, even if I had lost the harvest of 1789, to lose another for 1790 ! But one fine morning came Pitou, to tell me that I was on the point of losing something no father is rich enough to lose, — my daughter.”

Charny started. Billot looked at him sternly, and continued : “ I must tell you that only a league from my farm, at Boursonnes, lived a noble family, — a family of great lords, a family powerfully rich. This family was composed of three brothers. When they were children, and came often from Boursonnes to Villers Cotterets, the younger brothers almost always honored me by stopping at the farm. They said they had never drunk such good milk as my cows gave, nor eaten such good bread as Mother Billot’s. Sometimes they would add, — and I, poor fool ! believed they said this to repay me for my hospitality, — sometimes they added, they had never seen such a beautiful child as my little Catherine. Well, I was grateful to them for drinking my milk, eating my bread, and thinking my Catherine pretty. Well, why not ? If I could trust the King, who is half German, on his mother’s side, I could easily trust these boys. So when the second son — who had been a long time away from the neighborhood, and who was called George — was killed at Versailles, at the Queen’s threshold, on that dreadful October night, while bravely doing his duty as a gentleman, — God knows how the same blow which killed him, wounded me. Ah, Monsieur, his brother saw me, — his elder brother, who had seldom been to my house, — not because he was too proud, — I do him that justice, — but because he had gone away from home earlier than his brother George. — I say he saw me on my knees before the dead body, pouring out hot tears, as George had

poured out his blood. Ah, I can see him now, — there, at the bottom of that little courtyard, mouldy and damp, whither I carried him in my arms, in order that his body should not be mutilated, — poor young man! — like the bodies of his companions, De Varicourt and Des Huttes. I had almost as much blood on my clothes as you have on yours. Oh, he was a charming boy, when I used to see him on his gray nag, going to school at Villers Cotterets, with his basket in hand. Certainly, if I were thinking only of him, I believe I could weep as you do, Monsieur; but I think of the other one, and I mourn no longer.”

“The other one? What do you mean?” asked Charny.

“Wait!” said Billot. “We shall come to that soon enough. — Pitou came to Paris, and spoke to me two words, which proved that it was not my harvest merely that was endangered, but my child, — that it was my happiness, not my fortune, which ran the risk of destruction. I left the King in Paris. If he was acting in good faith, as Monsieur Gilbert said, all things would work together for the best, whether I was there or not; and so I returned to my farm. At first I feared Catherine was in danger of death. She had delirium, a cerebral fever, — what did I know about it? The condition in which I found her made me uneasy, — the more so, because Doctor Raynal forbade my entering the chamber till she was better. Think of it! A despairing father, forbidden to enter his daughter’s sick-room. I believed I had a right to listen at her door. I did listen! I then learned that she had caught the brain fever, that she had been almost crazy, because her lover had left her. I also had been away a whole year; but instead of being sick because her father was away, she had smiled over my absence. Why not? Did n’t my absence leave the coast

clear for seeing her lover ? — Catherine regained her health, but not her happiness. One month, two months, three months, six months passed away, without a single ray of gayety brightening that face, which I watched so constantly. One morning I saw her smile, and I trembled. Was her lover coming back ? Was this why she smiled ? Even so ! The next day a shepherd, who had seen him pass by that morning, told me of it. I made no doubt that by the evening of that very day the lover would come to my home, — or, rather, to Catherine's. When evening came on, I loaded my double-barrelled gun, and put myself on the watch."

"You did that, Billot ?" said Charny.

"Why not ?" said Billot. "I place myself in ambush in order to kill the wild boar who roots up my potatoes, the wolf who devours my lambs, the fox who steals my chickens ; and why not put myself into ambush, in order to kill the man who comes to rob me of my peace of mind, the lover who comes to dishonor my daughter ?"

"But at the decisive moment your heart failed you, did it not ?" said the Count, quickly.

"No, not the heart, but the eye and hand. A trace of blood showed that I had not entirely failed ; only, you understand," added Billot, with increasing bitterness, "that between a father and lover, my daughter did not hesitate. When I entered Catherine's chamber, Catherine had vanished."

"And you have not seen her since ?" asked Charny.

"No !" responded Billot. "Why should I see her again ? She well knows that if I see her I shall kill her."

Charny shrank back, as he noted, with feelings of admiration mixed with terror, the powerful nature standing before him.

"I set myself to work on my farm," continued Billot. "What mattered my personal unhappiness, so long as France was happy? Wasn't the King walking bravely in the Revolutionary road? Did n't he take part in the great Federal Feast? It was good to see once more that good King, to whom I had given my tricolored cockade on the Sixteenth of July, and whom I had helped to rescue on the Fifth of October! What happiness it must be for him to see all Frenchmen united on the Champ de Mars, pledging themselves, as one man, to their common country! When I saw this grand sight, I forgot all else for a moment, even Catherine. — No! That's false! A father never forgets his daughter. — The King took the oath in his turn. It seemed to me that he took it very clumsily, and swore with lip-service. He certainly took the oath in his seat, instead of swearing at the Patriot Altar, as others did. But, nonsense! He swore, and that was the main thing! An oath is an oath. It is not the place of its ceremonial which makes it sacred. When an honest man takes an oath, he keeps it; and the King had taken *his* oath! When I once more returned to Villers Cotterets, having no longer a daughter, I occupied myself with politics; and then I began to consider how, the winter before, the King had been willing to be abducted by the Marquis de Favras, — as it was said, — although the scheme was soon strangled. Later I heard how the King wished to leave France with his aunts, though this project also failed; and how he tried to drive to Saint Cloud, intending to go from there to Rouen, though the people kept him at home. All these things I heard, but I did not credit them. Had I not seen him, with my own eyes, raise his hand, and take the oath of national allegiance, on the Champ de Mars? Could I believe that a king, having taken an oath in

presence of three hundred thousand citizens, would hold it less sacred than oaths taken by common men? It was not likely. Well, day before yesterday, I went to market, at Meaux, and I was very much astonished when, in the morning,—for I must tell you that I slept at the station-agent's, a good friend of mine, with whom I had finished a large sale of grain. Well, as I was saying, I was very much astonished when, in a coach which stopped to get fresh horses, I saw and recognized the King, Queen, and Dauphin. I could n't be mistaken, for I was accustomed to see them,—and in a carriage, too. Why, on that Sixteenth of July I had accompanied them from Versailles to Paris.—Then I heard one of their men, dressed in yellow, give the order to drive to Châlons. The voice struck me. I turned and recognized—whom? The man who had stolen Catherine,—a noble gentleman, who was now doing duty as a lackey, running before the King's carriage."

As he spoke these words, Billot looked hard at the Count, to see if he understood that this concerned his brother Isidore; but Charny wiped away, with his handkerchief, the sweat which ran down his forehead, and held his peace.

Billot went on: "I wished to follow him, but he was too far off already. He was armed, and I was not; he was on horseback, and I was afoot. For an instant I ground my teeth over the idea that the King was escaping from France, and the ravisher escaping from me. I said to myself that I also had taken an oath of allegiance,—to the Nation; and though the King was breaking his word, I would not break mine. It was only three in the morning, and I was only a few leagues from Paris. On my good horse, this was only an affair of two hours. I would see Monsieur Bailly about it,—

an honest man, who, as it seemed to me, would be ready to side with those who keep their oaths, and against those who break them. This point settled, in order to lose no time, I begged my friend, the post-agent at Meaux, — without telling him what I was going to do, you understand, — to lend me his uniform as a member of the National Guard, and also his sabre and pistols. I also asked for the best horse in his stable, and instead of starting at a trot for Villers Cotterets, I started at a headlong gallop for Paris. My faith! I arrived just as they had discovered the King's flight, though nobody knew which way he had gone. Romeuf had been sent on the Valenciennes road, by Lafayette. See, now, how much there is in Chance! At the barrier he was arrested, but he persuaded them to send him to the National Assembly, which he entered just as Bailly, informed by myself, was giving more precise details of the royal journey. It was only necessary to prepare a properly written order, and change the route. The thing was done in an instant. Romeuf was started on the Châlons road, and I received an order to accompany him, — a mission which I fulfilled, as you see. Now however," added Billot, with a gloomy air, "I have overtaken the King, who has deceived me as a Frenchman, and I am satisfied that he will not escape me! It remains for me to overtake, at the appointed time, the man who has deceived me as a father; and he also will not escape me!"

"Alas, my dear Billot," said Charny, with a sigh, "you deceive yourself."

"How so?"

"I mean that the unhappy brother of whom you speak, towards whom you now feel so bitterly, has escaped you."

"He has fled?" cried Billot, with an indescribable expression of rage.

"No! but he is dead!"

"Dead?" cried Billot, trembling in spite of himself, and wiping his forehead, which was instantaneously covered with perspiration.

"Dead! and this blood, which you see on me, — and which you rightly compared just now to that with which you were covered in that little courtyard at Versailles, — this blood is his. If you doubt me, go downstairs, my dear Billot, and you will find his body lying in a little courtyard, — very like the one at Versailles, — where Isidore has been struck down in defence of the same cause which led to the blow which killed our brother George."

Billot looked at Charny, who spoke in a soft voice, while great tears rolled down his cheeks, and the farmer's eyes were hollow and his face dark. Suddenly he exclaimed: "Ah! There is then some justice in Heaven!" Then, as he hurried out of the room, he added: "Count, I believe your words; but no matter, I must myself see that justice has been done."

Charny saw him go down the stairs, stifling a sigh and wiping his eyes. Then, knowing he had no time to lose, Charny returned to the other chamber, went straight to the Queen's side, and asked softly: "Monsieur de Romeuf?"

"He is on our side," replied the Queen.

"So much the better," said Charny, "for there is nothing to hope from the other side."

"What is to be done?" asked the Queen.

"Gain time, till Bouillé arrives."

"Will he come?"

"Yes, for I am going after him."

“Oh Olivier, Olivier ! The streets are blockaded. You are watched. You cannot get through, for you will be massacred.”

Smilingly, but without speaking, Charny opened a window which looked out upon the garden, gave a last hopeful look towards the King, bowed to the Queen, and leaped down to the earth, fifteen feet below.

The Queen uttered a cry of terror, and hid her face in her hands ; but the young gentlemen ran to the window, and responded to the Queen's affrighted cry with one of joy. Charny had scaled the garden wall, and disappeared on the farther side.

It was time. At that instant Billot reappeared in the doorway.

CHAPTER II.

THE MARQUIS DE BOUILLÉ.

DURING these hours of agony, let us see what happened to the Marquis de Bouillé, who was expected so impatiently at Varennes, and on whom rested the last hopes of the royal family.

At nine in the evening — that is, at the very hour when the fugitives were entering Clermont — the Marquis left Stenay with his son Louis, and rode towards Dun, in order to be nearer the King.

When within a quarter-league of that village, fearing his presence might rouse unfavorable comments, the Marquis called a halt, and he and his companion established themselves in a ravine near the roadside, keeping their horses behind them.

There they waited. It was the hour when, in all probability, the royal courier would make his appearance.

Under such circumstances minutes seem like hours, and hours like centuries.

With an indifference which the impatient listeners would fain have regulated by the beating of their own hearts, the clocks slowly sounded the hours, — ten, eleven, midnight, one, two, three.

Between two and three daylight began to break. During these six hours of waiting, the least noise which reached the ears of the listeners brought with it hope, if the sound drew nearer, or disappointment, if it receded.

By daybreak the two watchmen grew desperate. The Marquis felt sure that some mischance had occurred, but

as he was ignorant what it could be, he decided upon a return to Stenay, in order to be at the centre of his command, where he might provide against accidents, as far as possible.

They therefore remounted their horses, and slowly retraced their steps towards Stenay. They were hard'y a quarter-league from that town when Louis, looking behind him, saw a cloud of dust, raised by the gallop of several horses.

Father and son stopped and waited. As the new-comers came nearer, the watchers thought they could recognize the riders. At last there was no longer any doubt. The new-comers were Jules de Bouillé and De Raigecourt.

It was now nearly four o'clock. The couple trotted out in front of the new-comers. As the riders met, each tongue in one company asked the same question, and each of the new arrivals made the same answer.

"What has happened?"

"The King has been arrested at Varennes!"

The news was terrible, — the more so, because the two youths, stationed at the extremity of the town, in the Grand Monarch Tavern, suddenly finding themselves in the midst of rebellion, had been obliged to escape by forcing their way through the crowd, and without being able to bring any definite information.

Terrible as was this vague information, it did not destroy every vestige of hope. Like all superior officers, who rely upon absolute discipline, the Marquis believed his orders had been fully executed, and did not dream of any obstacles on the military side. If the King had reached Varennes, then the different military detachments, which had been ordered to close in behind the King's progress, must also be at Varennes.

These detachments consisted of the forty hussars of the Lauzun Regiment, commanded by Choiseul; thirty dragoons at Sainte Menehould, commanded by Dandoins; one hundred and forty dragoons at Clermont, commanded by Damas; sixty hussars at Varennes, commanded by Jules de Bouillé and De Raigecourt, with whom these young men had not been able to communicate, on account of their own hasty departure, but who remained, in the absence of his superiors, under Rohrig's command.

True, no great confidence had been reposed in Rohrig, who was only twenty years old; but he would receive orders from his immediate superiors, Choiseul, Dandoins, or Damas, and join his men with those who came to the royal succor.

At that hour, therefore, according to the Marquis's reckoning, the King must have about him between one hundred and sixty and one hundred and eighty dragoons and a hundred hussars. Surely these would be equal to quelling an insurrection in a little town of sixteen or eighteen hundred inhabitants.

We have seen how events put all the Marquis's strategic calculations out of joint. Moreover a serious blow was soon to smite his sense of security.

While Jules and Raigecourt were telling their story to the General, they saw another rider coming towards them at full gallop. This meant more news. All eyes were turned upon him, and he was recognized as Rohrig.

The Marquis pushed towards him, for he was in one of those moods when one is not slow to see the weight of wrath fall even upon the innocent.

"What's the meaning of this?" cried the General. "Why have you left your post?"

"Your pardon, General," replied Rohrig, "but I come by order of Colonel Damas."

"Then Damas is at Varennes, with his dragoons?"

"Colonel Damas is at Varennes, — not with his dragoons, General, but only with one officer, an adjutant, and two or three privates."

"And the others?"

"The others refused to march."

"And Dandoins, and *his* dragoons?"

"They are detained as prisoners by the town authorities of Sainte Menehould."

"But surely," cried the General, "Choiseul is at Varennes, with *his* hussars and *yours*?"

"Choiseul's hussars have gone over to the popular side, and now hurrah for the Nation. As for mine, they are shut up in their barracks, guarded by the Varennes National Guards."

"And you did n't put yourself at their head? You did n't charge upon these ruffians? You did n't rally to the King's support?"

"My General forgets that I had no such orders, that Monsieur Jules and Monsieur Raigecourt were my chiefs, and that I was completely ignorant that his Majesty was expected at Varennes."

"That's true!" said Jules and Raigecourt, in a breath, speaking in the interests of truth.

"When I heard the first noise of the outbreak," continued young Lieutenant Rohrig, "I went down into the street to ascertain what it all meant. I learned that about fifteen minutes earlier a coach had been stopped, said to contain the King and royal family, and that the persons inside had been taken to the town-solicitor's house. I went at once to the town-solicitor's. There were crowds of armed men in the streets. The drum was beating and the alarm-bell ringing. In the midst of this tumult I felt a touch on my shoulder.

I turned and saw Colonel Damas, with a riding-coat over his uniform. He asked if I was the lieutenant in command of the hussars at Varennes. 'Yes, my Colonel,' I replied. — 'You know me?' he asked. — 'You are Colonel Charles de Damas.' — Thereupon he ordered me to mount without losing a second, ride towards Dun and Stenay, till I met the Marquis de Bouillé, and tell him that Dandoins and his dragoons were prisoners at Sainte Menehould, that his men had refused to obey, that Choiseul's hussars threatened to espouse the popular side, and that the only hope of the King and royal family, under arrest in that house, lay in the Marquis. Under such orders I supposed I had no right to raise any objections, but, on the contrary, that it was my duty to obey blindly. I mounted my horse, rode like the wind, and here I am."

"And Damas told you nothing else?"

"Yes, indeed! He told me they would make every effort to gain time, in order to give you, my General, time for reaching Varennes."

"Well, well!" said the Marquis, with a sigh, "I see that everybody has acted for the best. Now we must do *our* best!" Then he added, to his son Louis: "I will stay here. These gentlemen will carry my orders here and there. To begin with, the detachments from Mouza and Dun must at once set out for Varennes, guard the passage over the Meuse River, and begin the attack. — Rohrig, bear this order from me, and tell them they will soon be reinforced."

The young man to whom this order was addressed saluted the General, and started in the direction of Dun, to have it executed.

The General continued: "Raigecourt, head off the Swiss Regiment from Castella, which is on the march to

Stenay. As soon as you find them, explain the urgency of the situation, and give them my order to double their speed. — Away with you !”

After seeing Raigecourt ride off in the opposite direction from that taken by Rohrig, as fast as his tired horse would permit, the Marquis turned towards his second son. “Jules, change horses at Stenay, and be off for Montmédy. Let Klinglin start towards Dun with his regiment of Nassau Infantry, which is at Montmédy, and report personally at Stenay. Be off, now !”

Jules saluted and was off in a flash.

Then the General turned towards his eldest son. “Louis, the Royal Germans are at Stenay, are they not ?”

“Yes, father !”

“They received my orders to be all ready to ride at daybreak ?”

“I myself gave this order to their colonel.”

“Bring me that regiment. I will wait for it, here in the road. Perhaps somebody will come along with fresh news. The Royal Germans are true blue, aren’t they ?”

“Yes, father.”

“Very well, then, the Royal Germans will suffice. With them we will march on Varennes. — Go !”

Count Louis was off in his turn. In ten minutes he reappeared, for the distance was very short. “The Royal Germans are following me,” he said to the General.

“They were ready for duty, then ?”

“No ! To my great amazement, they were not. The commander could not have understood me, when I gave him your orders yesterday, for I found him abed ; but he at once rose, and promised to go himself to the barracks and hasten the preparations. Fearing you would

be anxious, I came back to tell you the cause of this delay."

"You think he will be here soon?"

"The commander said he would come straight after me."

They waited ten minutes, fifteen minutes, twenty minutes; but nobody came.

The General looked impatiently at his son, who said, in reply to this look, "I'll ride back again, father!" and putting his horse at full gallop, he went back into Stenay.

Long as the interval had seemed to the Marquis's impatience, the commander had not used it profitably. Only a few men were ready. The young officer complained bitterly, repeated the General's orders, and on the commander's positive promise that in five minutes his soldiers should be outside the town, Louis returned to his father.

As he left the town, he observed that the gate, through which he was riding for the fourth time, was now held by the National Guards.

The Bouillés waited this time five, ten, fifteen minutes, and still nobody came; and the Marquis felt as if every minute lost was a year taken from the lives of the royal prisoners.

Presently they saw a cabriolet coming along the road from Dun. It was Léonard's cabriolet, for he was still pursuing his journey, but with increasing worriment.

The General stopped him; but the farther Léonard came from Paris, the more the image of his brother, — whose hat and overcoat he still wore, — and of Madame de l'Aage, who waited for him to dress her hair, and had never been barbered by anybody else, — passed and repassed before his mind, till these remembrances

reduced him to such a state of mental chaos, that the Marquis could get nothing out of him that savored of common sense. Indeed, having left Varennes before the King's detention, Léonard had little news to tell.

This incident served to allay the General's impatience for a few minutes ; but at length, when nearly an hour had rolled away since the first orders were sent to the Royal Germans, he requested his son to ride into Stenay for the third time, and not to return without the troops.

Louis started at a furious pace. On arriving at the public square his anger was augmented. Only fifty men were in their saddles. He began by taking these fifty men, and stationing them at the gate, so as to be sure and keep it free for egress and ingress. Then he rode back to the General, who was still waiting, and assured him that this time the commander and soldiers were certainly at his heels, and so he believed ; but not till ten minutes afterward, when Louis was about to ride into the town for the fourth time, did they see the head of the advancing regiment.

Under other circumstances the General would have had the commander arrested by his own men ; but at such a moment he feared lest this should disaffect both officers and soldiers ; so he contented himself with reproaching the commander for his tardiness, and then harangued the soldiers. He told them what an honorable task was reserved for them,—that not only the liberty, but perhaps the life of the King and royal family, depended upon them. He promised new honors to the officers and additional recompense to the soldiers ; and, to begin with, he distributed four hundred louis to the privates.

This speech, ending with such a peroration, produced

the effect he desired. There was a tremendous shout for the King, and then the Royal Germans started for Varennes at a rapid trot.

At Dun they found, guarding the Meuse River, a detachment of thirty men, left by Deslon, when he left Dun with Charny. The Royal Germans united with these thirty men, and kept on their way.

They had eight long leagues to cover, and the road was full of hills and valleys, so the troops could not ride as rapidly as they wished. Moreover it was necessary to keep the soldiers fresh enough to sustain an attack or make a charge. They felt as if they were advancing into an enemy's country. Right and left, alarms were ringing in the villages. In advance of them they could hear something like a fusillade. Still they kept on.

At Grange-au-Bois they saw a hatless horseman, bending over his saddle, tearing down the road, and apparently making signals of distress. The soldiers hurried on, and horseman and regiment drew nearer and nearer together.

This horseman was Charny. "To the King! to the King, gentlemen!" he shouted, as soon as he could be heard, at the same time waving his hand.

"To the King! Long live the King!" shouted soldiers and officers in reply.

Charny took his place in the ranks, and in four words explained the situation. When he left Varennes the King was still there; so all was not yet lost.

The horses were already weary, but the men kept well their speed; for the beasts had been crammed with oats, and the men had been warmed to a white heat by Bouillé's speech and golden louis. The regiment therefore tore on like a hurricane, with shouts of loyalty.

At Crépy they met a priest, — a Constitutional priest. Seeing the troops rushing towards Varennes, he said: "Go on! Go on! Luckily you'll be too late!"

Louis de Bouillé overheard him, and rode upon him, with drawn sabre.

"Youngster, what are you at?" cried his father.

The young man understood full well that to attack an unarmed man, and an ecclesiastic to boot, was a double crime; but he took one foot out of his stirrup, and gave the priest a smart kick in the stomach.

"You'll be too late!" repeated the priest, as he rolled over in the dust.

On they went, cursing this prophet of evil, but drawing nearer and nearer to the distant gunshots. Deslon and his seventy hussars were having a skirmish with an equal number of National Guards. The Royal Germans charged upon the guards, dispersed them, and passed on. From Deslon they learned that the King had left Varennes at eight o'clock that morning. Bouillé consulted his watch, and found it now lacked only five minutes of nine.

So be it! All hope was not lost. They could not now think of going through the village, over barricades; so they must make a detour, turning to the left. To go to the right was impossible, on account of the lay of the land and the condition of the soil. By the left they must cross the river. Charny assured them it was fordable; so they left Varennes on the right, and rode into the open fields. However numerous the escort which accompanied the royal coach, the Royal Germans meant to attack it on the Clermont road, and either liberate the King, or be killed in the attempt.

About two-thirds of the length of the circuit they came to the river. Charny urged his horse into the water. The Bouillés followed. After them came the other officers,

and then the privates. The stream was almost hidden beneath so many horses and uniforms. In ten minutes the ford was crossed, and the passage through the cool running water had refreshed both the horses and their masters. Then they resumed their ride towards Clermont, like birds on the wing.

Suddenly Charny, who preceded the troops some twenty paces, paused, and uttered a cry. He was on the edge of a deeply embanked canal, whose opening was on a level with the grass. Though he had drawn it on his topographical maps, Charny had completely forgotten this canal, which extended several leagues, and everywhere presented the same difficulties as at this point. If they could not cross it here, neither could they cross it anywhere else.

Charny set the example, and urged his horse down into the water. Though the canal was too deep to ford, the Count's horse swam vigorously for the opposite side; only the bank was so steep and slippery that the Count's horse could not get any hold upon it with his iron hoofs. Three or four times Charny tried to climb up; but he failed, despite his skill as a horseman. After several desperate, intelligent, and almost human efforts, the horse each time trying in vain to gain a solid foothold for his forefeet, he finally slipped backwards into the water, snorting painfully, and almost falling upon his rider.

Charny knew that what could not be accomplished by his horse, a thoroughbred animal, with a rider of acknowledged ability, could certainly not be accomplished by the four hundred horses and men of the squadron.

The experiment was a failure. Fate was too strong. The King and Queen were lost. If Charny could not

save them, there was only one duty more; — to perish with them.

He made one last effort, useless like the others, to reach the turf above. In the midst of this effort he stuck his sabre, halfway up the blade, into the clay which formed the steep bank of the canal. This sabre made a foothold, — useless for a horse, but serviceable for a man.

Abandoning his stirrups and bridle, Charny let his horse fall riderless into the fatal water. Then the Count swam towards his sabre, grasped it, pulled himself up, and, after several unsuccessful efforts, finally scrambled over upon the grass above.

Then he looked back. On the other side of the canal he could see Bouillé and his son, weeping with anger, and the soldiers gloomy and spiritless; for they all knew, after seeing Charny's losing struggle before their very eyes, how useless it would be for them to try to cross this impassable canal.

The General wrung his hands in despair, — he, whose enterprises had always succeeded, whose actions had heretofore been always crowned with such success as to give birth, in the army, to the proverb: "Lucky as Bouillé."

"Oh, gentlemen," he cried, in dolorous tones, "never call me *lucky* again."

"No, General," cried Charny, from the other bank; "but pray be tranquil. I will say you have done all any man could do, and when I tell them that, I shall be believed. — Adieu, General!"

Across the fields, on foot, covered with mud, dripping with water, disarmed of his sabre, which remained in the clayey bank of the canal, — his pistols useless, because the powder was wet, — Charny took up his course, and soon disappeared amidst groups of trees, standing here

and there along the way, like advance sentinels of the forest. He soon reached the road by which the royal prisoners were sure to pass. He had but to follow it, in order to rejoin them.

Before doing so he turned for the last time, and saw Bouillé and his troops still standing on the edge of that cursed canal. Despite the impossibility of going forward, they could not make up their minds to beat a retreat.

Charny made them a last sign, turned a corner, and soon vanished altogether. For his guidance there was a tremendous noise, made up of the outcries, clamors, threats, jeers, and maledictions of ten thousand men.

CHAPTER III.

THE DEPARTURE.

OUR readers know that the King had departed from Varennes; but it remains for us to say more or less about that departure and the journey, during which we shall see fulfilled the destiny of several faithful adherents and last friends, whom fate and devotion grouped about the dying monarchy.

Let us return to the house of Monsieur Sausse, the town-solicitor at Varennes.

As has already been stated, hardly had Charny's feet touched the soil, after he lowered himself from the window, than the door reopened, and Billot appeared on the threshold.

His face was gloomy. His eyes, overhung by brows weighty with thought, were deep and penetrating. He passed in review all the personages of the drama there being enacted, but only two seemed worthy of note within the circle of his observation.

Charny's flight was obvious enough; for the Count was no longer there, and Damas was closing the window. Leaning forward, Billot fancied he saw the fugitive clear the garden wall.

Some sort of a compact had been concluded between Monsieur Romeuf and the Queen, — a compact in which Romeuf would pledge himself to remain neutral. At least, so it seemed to Billot.

Behind Billot, the adjoining storeroom was again filled with the same sort of people whom the farmer's gesture had expelled, before his private interview with Charny in that very room,—men of the people, armed with muskets, scythes, and sabres. These men seemed instinctively drawn, as by magnetic influence, to obey this man as their chief,—a plebeian like themselves, in whom they discerned a democratic patriotism equal to their own, or—perhaps we ought to say—a hatred equal to theirs.

Billot looked about him. As his eye encountered the glances of these armed men, he saw that he could count upon their aid, in case it should become necessary to resort to violence.

“Well,” he said to Romeuf, “have they decided to go?”

The Queen cast upon Billot one of her side glances, which would have pulverized those imprudent people upon whom they fell, if she could have infused into those glances the power of Jove's thunderbolts. Without any reply, she sat firmly down, grasping the arms of her chair as if she would weld herself to it.

“The King asks for a little delay,” said Romeuf, “as nobody has slept all night, and their Majesties are overcome with fatigue.”

“Monsieur de Romeuf,” replied Billot, “you know very well it is not because their Majesties are tired, that they ask for delay, but because they hope the Marquis de Bouillé will arrive during that delay. Let their Majesties beware,” added Billot, with emphasis, “for if they refuse to come of their own free will, they will be dragged by the feet to their coach.”

“Wretch!” exclaimed Damas, rushing towards Billot, with his sword bare; but Billot only turned and folded

his arms. He had no need to defend himself; for in a second eight or ten men rushed in from the other room, and Damas found himself confronted by as many different weapons.

The King saw that it needed only a word or a gesture, and both bodyguards, Choiseul, Damas, and the two or three other officers who were near him, would be slaughtered; so he said: "All right! Harness the horses, and we'll go."

Madame Brunier, one of the Queen's ladies, screamed and fainted. This scream wakened the two children, and the Dauphin began to cry.

"Ah Monsieur!" said the Queen, addressing Billot, "have you no children, that you are so cruel to a mother?"

Billot trembled, but he said, with a bitter smile: "No, Madame, I have none." Then he added, to the King: "No need to harness the horses. They are already harnessed."

"Ah, well! Let them drive up!"

"The coach is at the door."

The King went to the window, and saw the coach was indeed ready; though he had not heard it drive up, in consequence of the great noise in the street. The people could see the King through the glass. Then a formidable outcry, or rather, a formidable menace, arose from the multitude. The King grew pale.

Choiseul approached the Queen and asked: "What are her Majesty's orders? Myself and comrades would prefer to die, rather than see what we must see."

"Do you believe Monsieur de Charny is safe?" asked the Queen, in a hasty whisper.

"Oh, as to that, I am sure of it," replied Choiseul.

"Well then, let us go; but in the name of Heaven,

—I ask it more for your sakes than ours,—do not leave us,—either you or your friends.”

The King understood the fear which possessed the Queen, and said: “Assuredly, Monsieur de Choiseul and Monsieur de Damas are to accompany us; but I do not see their horses.”

“That’s true!” said Romeuf to Billot, “we have no right to prevent these gentlemen from following the King and Queen.”

“These gentlemen may follow the King and Queen as they can,” said Billot. “Our orders relate to the transportation of the King and Queen, and nothing was said about these gentlemen.”

“But I declare,” said the King, with more firmness than might have been expected of him, “I declare that I will not go, unless these gentlemen have their horses.”

“What do you say to that?” said Billot, turning to the men who occupied the other room. “The King won’t go, unless these gents have their horses!” The men burst into a laugh.

“I will go and get them,” said Romeuf; but Choiseul stepped in front of him and said, barring Romeuf’s way: “Do not leave their Majesties. Your commission gives you some power over the populace, and it is incumbent upon your honor not to see a hair of their Majesties’ heads injured.”

Romeuf stopped. Billot shrugged his shoulders, and said: “All right! I’ll go myself.” At the door he turned, and said with frowning brows: “I shall be obeyed, sha’n’t I?”

“Oh, be easy!” replied the men, with another burst of laughter, which indicated, in case of resistance, that they would attend to the matter without pity.

Indeed, such was their irritation, that these fellows were certainly ready to use force against the royal family, and fire upon any one of them who should try to escape.

Billot did not take the trouble to return to the chamber. One of the men was near the window, watching what took place in the street. Presently he said: "There are the horses! Now let's be off!"

"Let's be off!" repeated his comrades, with an emphasis which admitted no discussion.

The King walked first. Choiseul followed, giving his arm to the Queen. Next came Damas, giving his arm to Madame Elizabeth. Then came Madame de Tourzel and the two children. Around them, forming a group, were the other members of this faithful little company.

As the envoy of the National Assembly, and consequently endowed with a certain sacredness of character, it was Romeuf's particular duty to protect the royal party; but it must be said that Romeuf had abundant need to protect himself. It was rumored abroad that not only had he executed the Assembly's orders very mildly, but that by his inertia, if not actively, he had favored the escape of one of their Majesties' most devoted adherents, who had hastened to General Bouillé, with a command to come at once to the royal relief. The result was, that while Billot's conduct was glorified by the populace, who were disposed to recognize him as their leader, Romeuf, when he reached the street, heard about him cries of *Aristocrat!* and *Traitor!* accompanied by threats.

The royal party entered their carriages, in the same order they had followed in descending the staircase. The two bodyguards took their accustomed places on the seats outside.

On their way downstairs Valory had approached the King and said: "Sire, my comrade and myself have a favor to ask of your Majesty."

"What is it, gentlemen?" the King had replied, astonished that he could dispense any favor whatever.

"Sire, as we have no longer the happiness to serve you in any military capacity, we ask the favor of holding places near you as your domestics."

"My domestics, young gentlemen?" cried the King. "Impossible!"

Valory bowed: "Sire," said he, "in the situation in which your Majesty finds yourself, it is our opinion that such a position would be honorable to princes of the blood royal, and all the more so for poor gentlemen like ourselves."

"Well, gentlemen, so be it!" said the King, with tears in his eyes. "Remain, and never forsake us!"

This is why these two young men, making a reality of their livery, and their acquired functions as couriers, took their places on the upper seat, as Choiseul closed the door of the coach.

"Gentlemen," said the King, "I give you positive orders to take me to Montmédy. — Postilions, — to Montmédy!" but a single voice, an immense voice, — the voice not of one community, but of ten communities together, — shouted: "To Paris! To Paris!"

Then, after a moment of silence, Billot pointed with his sabre in the direction to be followed, and said: "Postilions, to Clermont!"

The coach began to move in obedience to that order, but Louis the Sixteenth leaned out to speak a last word of protest: "I call you all to witness that I am constrained by violence."

Overcome by this last effort of will, which surpassed

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any he had previously made, the unhappy King sank back into the coach, between the Queen and Madame Elizabeth, while the carriage continued on its way. At the end of five minutes, before they had travelled two hundred steps, great cries were heard behind. On account of the positions which they occupied, and partly from their temperaments, the Queen was the first to thrust her head outside the curtain; but almost instantly she drew her head inside again, covering her eyes with both hands. "Oh, ill-fortune betides us! They have assassinated Choiseul!"

The King made a movement, but both his wife and sister held him back, and he sank down between them again. Besides, the coach just then turned a street-corner, and it was impossible to see more than twenty rods away.

This is what had happened. At Sausse's door Choiseul and Damas mounted their horses; but Romeuf's horse had disappeared, though it had been brought from the stables with the others. Romeuf, Floirac, and Adjutant Foucq therefore followed afoot, hoping either that some of the still faithful troopers would offer their own steeds, or that some horses might be found which had been abandoned by their masters, — faithless hussars and dragoons, who were busy fraternizing with the populace, and drinking the health of the Nation; but they had not walked fifteen rods when Choiseul, from his place beside the coach, saw that Romeuf, Floirac, and Foucq were in danger of being swallowed up, separated, suffocated in the crowd. Choiseul halted an instant, and let the coach pass on. Judging that Romeuf, by virtue of the mission wherewith he was charged, could be of most use to the royal family, and yet was in equal danger with his companions, he shouted to his servant, James Brisack,

who was somewhere in the crowd : " My second horse for Monsieur de Romeuf ! "

Hardly were the words spoken, when the mob surrounded him, shouting : " It's the Duke ! It's Choiseul ! It's one of them as wanted to steal the King ! Death to the Aristocrat ! Death to the traitor ! "

In such popular tumults we know with what rapidity the blow follows the word. Wrenched from his saddle, Choiseul fell backward, head over heels, and was swallowed in that terrible gulf, — the multitude, — out of which, in that epoch of mortal passion, a man could emerge only in lacerated pieces.

As he fell five men rushed to his rescue, — Damas, Floirac, Romeuf, Foucq, and James Brisack, — the Duke's special servant, — from whose hands the bridle which he held had been snatched, so that, his hands being thus freed, he could devote them to his master's service.

There was an instant of awful contest, — like one of those combats of antiquity, or among the Arabs of our own day, — around the bleeding bodies of the wounded and dead.

Contrary to all probabilities, but luckily for him, Choiseul was neither killed nor wounded ; or rather, considering the dangerous weapons borne by the mob, his wounds were slight. With his musket-barrel, a gendarme parried a scythe sweep, destined for the Duke. A second cut was parried by James Brisack, with a stick snatched from another assailant's hand. The stick was cut in twain like a reed, but the blow was turned aside, and so wounded only the Duke's horse.

Then Adjutant Foucq shouted : " Dragoons, to the rescue ! " Several soldiers ran forward at this cry. Ashamed to let the man be massacred who was their commander, they soon cleared a pathway to his side.

Romeuf sprang in front of them, crying : " In the name of the National Assembly, whose commissioner I am, and of General Lafayette, by whom I am deputed, take these gentlemen at once to the townhouse."

As these two names, Lafayette and the National Assembly, were then enjoying their greatest popularity, Romeuf's words produced their intended effect.

"To the townhouse! To the townhouse!" shouted many voices.

A determined effort was made by right-minded men, and soon Choiseul and his companions found themselves dragged towards the townhouse.

It required an hour and a half to reach there; and each minute of the ninety was a menace or foretaste of death. The slightest opening in the protective circle around the prisoners at once gave passage to the blade of a sabre, the point of a scythe, or the prongs of a pitchfork.

At last they reached the townhouse. Only one town official remained there, and he was completely upset by the responsibility laid upon him. By way of discharging that responsibility, he ordered Choiseul, Damas, and Floirac to be locked up, under the supervision of National Guardsmen. As Romeuf declared he would not quit Choiseul, who, for Romeuf's sake, had exposed himself to all that had happened, the official ordered him to the lockup, with the other three.

At a sign from the Duke, his servant, who was of too little consequence to receive much attention, vanished. His first care — let us not forget that James Brisack was a groom — was to look after the horses. He learned that some of them, almost safe and sound, were in a tavern, guarded by several hostlers. Reassured on this point he entered the eating-room, asked for some tea, a

quill, and some ink, and wrote to Madame de Choiseul and Madame de Grammont, to assure them of the welfare of their son and nephew, who — in all human probability — was safe the moment he became a prisoner.

Poor James Brisack was far ahead of time in announcing this news. To be sure Choiseul was a prisoner. To be sure he was in the lockup. To be sure he was under the guard of the rural militia; but they forgot to station sentinels at the wicket of the cell, and through these loopholes the prisoners were several times fired upon, so that they were obliged to take refuge in the farthest corners. This precarious situation lasted twenty-four hours, during which Romeuf, with praiseworthy devotion, refused to quit his companions.

At last, however, the National Guards arrived from Verdun, and Romeuf had the three prisoners placed in their keeping; but he would not leave them till he received from the officers, who were to guard his friends, their solemn promise not to forsake the prisoners till they were safe in the custody of the High Court at Paris.

As to poor Isidore de Charny, his body was dragged to the house of a weaver, where he was shrouded by unfamiliar but pious hands, — less happy in this than his brother George, who at least received the last offices from the fraternal hands of the Count, and from the friendly hands of Gilbert and Billot.

Then Billot was a devoted and respectful friend of the family. We have seen how this friendship, devotion, and respect had changed into hatred, — a hatred as implacable as that friendship, devotion, and respect had been profound.

CHAPTER IV.

VIA DOLOROSA : STATION ONE.

As the terrible transit of Jesus, from the Mount of Olives to the Cross, is known as the *Via Dolorosa*, or Sorrowful Way, we may designate by that name the painful journey of the royal family to Paris, with each chapter as a station on that wearisome road.

Alas ! Louis the Sixteenth and Marie Antoinette had also their Calvary ! In their terrible suffering, — their *passion*, if we may apply to these human beings a word bearing a special and sacred significance, — were they expiating the accumulated faults of an overbearing monarchy, as Jesus the Christ atoned for the sins of a world ? This is a problem not solved by the past, but perhaps the future will reveal its lesson.

The royal party advanced slowly, for the horses could only move as fast as the escort. This escort was largely made up of men, armed — as we have before said — with pitchforks, guns, scythes, sabres, pikes, and flails ; but there were also large numbers of women and children, — the women often holding their children aloft, so that they could see the spectacle of a king carried by force to his capital city, a sight they were unlikely ever to behold again.

In the midst of this multitude, which flowed over the road, into the fields on both sides, was the King's big coach, followed by the cabriolet containing the ladies Brunier and Neuville, — the smaller vehicle tagging

after the larger, like a shallop following a big ship into the jaws of perdition, amidst furious seas threatening to engulf them both.

From time to time some unexpected circumstance increased the fury of the storm, — if we may be permitted to follow out this metaphor. The outcries, menaces, and imprecations redoubled. The human waves were agitated like the sea, now rising into mountains, now sinking again. Sometimes this sea seemed to completely absorb the ship whose prow could hardly breast its way through the waves, and with it the victims which the vessel carried, and the frail shallop which followed in its wake.

They reached Clermont without seeing the terrible escort diminish, though the distance was about four leagues. Those men in it, whose occupations recalled them to their homes, were replaced by others who ran in from neighboring villages along the route, and who wished to enjoy the spectacle whereof the others were weary.

Among all the captives transported in this perambulatory prison two were particularly exposed to the anger of the crowd, and made the butt of its gibes and assaults. These two were the unfortunate guards, Malden and Valory, who were on the large outside seat. Every instant, — and this was one way of striking at the royal family, whose persons were held inviolable by an order from the National Assembly, — every instant bayonets were pointed at their bodies. Sometimes a scythe — which seemed like the legendary scythe of old Death himself — was lifted above their heads ; or a spear, gliding like a perfidious serpent between the two men, would strike the living flesh with its sharp tooth, and then as rapidly retreat, with its point wet and red, satisfied to

show its master that the thrust had not failed of its sanguinary purpose.

All at once they were surprised to see, pushing his way through the crowd, a man hatless and unarmed, and with his clothes covered with mud. After respectfully saluting the King and Queen, he grasped the side of the coach, and drew himself up into the outside seat, between the two bodyguards.

The Queen uttered a cry of mingled fear, joy, and grief. She recognized Charny. Her fear arose from seeing him do such an audacious thing, for it was almost a miracle that he was able to gain so perilous a position without receiving a single wound. Her joy arose from her happiness in seeing that he had escaped the unknown dangers which he must have encountered in his flight that morning, — dangers which seemed all the greater, because, without being able to specialize any one of them, her imagination fancied him the victim of all. Yet she was sad, for she knew that Charny's return, in such a condition and alone, bade them renounce all hope of succor from General Bouillé.

The crowd, astonished at this man's audacity, seemed to respect him the more on that account.

Hearing the noise around the carriage, Billot, who was on horseback at the head of the escort, turned and recognized Charny, and said to himself: "Ah! I'm glad nothing has happened to him; but woe to the fool-hardy man who makes another such attempt, for he is sure to pay for both."

They arrived at Sainte Meneshould about two o'clock on that June afternoon.

The deprivation of sleep on the night of their departure from Paris, and the exertions and emotions of the night at Varennes, had powerfully affected all the

party, but especially the Dauphin; and by the time they reached Sainte Menehould, the poor child was in a very feverish condition. The King therefore commanded a halt.

Unhappily, of all the villages scattered along the route, Sainte Menehould was the most enraged towards that unhappy family, thus held in captivity. No attention was paid to the King's order; but contradictory orders were given by Billot, that fresh horses should immediately be attached to the carriage, and Billot was obeyed.

The Dauphin wept, and asked, amidst his sobs: "Why don't they undress me, and put me in my nice bed, when I'm so ill?"

The Queen could not withstand these complaints, and her pride was broken down. She raised in her arms the weeping and shivering prince, and said, as she showed him to the people: "Ah, gentlemen, for the sake of this poor child, let us stop!" but the horses were already hitched to the coach, and Billot gave the command "Forward!" which was repeated by the populace.

As the farmer rode by the window, to once more take his place at the head of the escort, the Queen addressed him: "Ah, Monsieur! I repeat, — it is evident you have no children."

"And I repeat to you in my turn, Madame," said Billot, with gloomy look and voice, "that I have had one, but I have her no longer."

"Do what you will," said the Queen, "since you are the stronger; but have a care! for there are no voices crying louder for Heaven's vengeance than the voices of little children."

Again the procession started. The journey through the village of Sainte Menehould was most painful. The

excitement roused by the sight of Drouet, to whose exertions the arrest of the prisoners was due, would have been a pointed lesson for those prisoners, if kings were capable of learning anything; but in these popular outcries Louis the Sixteenth and Marie Antoinette could see only blind fury. In these Patriots, convinced that they were saving France, the King and Queen could see only rebels against lawful government.

The King was utterly cast down. The sweat of wrath and shame ran down the Queen's forehead. Madame Elizabeth, that heavenly angel astray on the earth, prayed in a low voice, — not for herself, but for her brother, her sister-in-law, her nephew, her niece, and all the people. In her prayer this saintly woman could not separate those whom she regarded as victims from those whom she looked upon as executioners, and in the same invocation she laid them all at the feet of her Lord.

At the entrance of Sainte Meneshould, the flood, which had covered all the plain like an inundation, could not force itself into the narrow streets, but surged out on both sides of the village. As the halt at Sainte Meneshould was only long enough, however, for a change of horses, the crowds came together again at the farther end of the town, and once more the human waves beat against the royal coach.

The King had been led to believe, — and this belief had perhaps impelled him forward in a wrong direction, — the King had been led to believe that the spirit of Paris alone was badly misguided, and he counted on provincial loyalty; yet here was the rural spirit, not only disappointing him, but turning pitilessly against him. These good country people had surprised Choiseul at Sommeville Bridge, imprisoned Dandoins at Sainte Meneshould, driven Damas from Clermont by force of arms,

and murdered Isidore under the King's own eyes. Everybody was stirred up to prevent his flight, even the priest whom Louis de Bouillé had overturned with the toe of his boot, in the highway ; though of this exploit the King was ignorant, for it had occurred during the ride of General Bouillé's troopers, and Charny was the only man in the present company who could know anything about that little occurrence.

It would have seemed still worse to the King, if he could have seen what was going on in various villages and cities, when they heard the news of his arrest. In an instant the whole population was roused. Women carried in their arms their babes in swaddling-clothes. Mothers led by the hand children old enough to walk. Men armed themselves. Whatever weapons they could lay their hands upon, they suspended around their bodies, or carried on their shoulders. They came with a resolution, — not to serve as the King's escort, but to kill the King ; that King who, in a certain time of harvest, — a harvest more sorrowful than that in poor Champagne, on the very edge of Châlons, which was so poverty-stricken, that, in their vulgar but expressive language, the people began to call the province *lousy Champagne* ! — the King who, in that time of trouble, sent for their harvest, that it might be trodden under the feet of the horses of pillaging pandours and thieving hussars. Three angels protected the royal carriage, — the poor little Dauphin, ill and fretful in his mother's lap ; Madame Royale, who, glowing with the beauty which accompanies the sandy complexion, stood upright at the carriage window, looking upon everything with a steadfast but surprised gaze ; and finally Madame Elizabeth, already twenty-seven years old, whose purity of heart and body wreathed about her forehead an aureole of purest youth.

When they saw all this, the Queen bending over her sick boy, and the King so broken down, the anger of these men's wrath abated, and sought some other object of attack. They jeered at the guards, sneered at and insulted those noble and devoted hearts, — calling them cowards and traitors.

Upon the heads of the multitude, mostly bare, and heated by the bad wine of the taverns, poured the rays of a June sun, making a rainbow of flame on the cloud of chalky dust, raised by the immense rabble as it passed along.

Two anecdotes are recounted by Michelet, the poetic and picturesque historian, who even names the two heroes, as the dignity of his recital permits him to do. These anecdotes may illustrate our point.

What would the King, who was still under an illusion, have said, had he known that a man went from Mézières, with his gun on his shoulder, and walked sixty leagues in three days, on purpose to kill the King, when he returned to Paris? Yet when this man reached Paris, and saw the King, so poor, so unhappy, so humiliated, he shook his head, and renounced his project.

What would the King have said, if he had known about a certain young carpenter, who — not doubting, after the King's flight, that he would be immediately brought to trial and condemned — left the farthest border of Burgundy, and hurried along the roads, in order to be present at that trial and condemnation? On his way a master carpenter made him understand that it would take much longer time than he supposed, and urged him to remain and work with him. The young carpenter did stay with the old master, and married his daughter.

What Louis the Sixteenth did see was perhaps more

significant, but no less awful ; for we have shown how a triple buckler of innocence shielded him from wrath, but turned it against his attendants.

As they left Saint Menehould, when they were perhaps half a league (or a mile and a half) from the village, an old gentleman came galloping across the fields on horseback. He was a chevalier of the Order of Saint Louis, and wore its cross in his buttonhole. For a moment the crowd supposed the man had come out of simple curiosity, and made way for him. Hat in hand the old nobleman approached the carriage, saluting the King and Queen, and calling them by their royal titles ; but the populace had begun to discover where genuine force and real majesty resided, and were indignant at this bestowal of empty honors upon the prisoners, — honors due to the Nation only, — and so they began to growl and threaten.

The King had learned to understand these growls. He had heard them at Varennes, and now divined their signification.

“Monsieur,” he said to the old Knight of Saint Louis, “the Queen and myself are deeply touched by this mark of devotion, which you bestow upon us in this public manner ; but in God’s name go away, for your life is insecure !”

“My life is my King’s,” said the old nobleman, “and the last day of my life will be the more beautiful, if I die for my King !”

When these words were overheard, the growling grew louder.

“Retire, Monsieur, retire !” said the King. Then he added, leaning out of the carriage : “My friends, give place, I beseech you, to Monsieur de Dampierre !”

Those who were nearest, and heard the King’s appeal,

tried to stand aside, and make room for the Chevalier; but unfortunately, a little farther off, both horse and rider found themselves uncomfortably crowded. The old nobleman used bridle and spur to excite his horse, but the crowd was so compact as to be hardly able to control its own movements. Several terrified women screamed, a child bawled with fright, the men doubled their fists, and the old gentleman shook his whip at them all. Then the menaces changed to roars, and the wrath of the populace rose like a lion's. Monsieur de Dampierre was already on the edge of the human forest. He pricked his horse on both sides, and the animal bravely leaped the ditch, and started across the fields at a gallop. At that moment the old gentlemen turned. Doffing his hat he shouted, "God save the King!" — a last honor to his sovereign, but an insult to the populace.

A gunshot was heard. Pulling a pistol from his holster, Dampierre returned shot for shot. Then everybody who had a loaded musket fired on the deluded man. His horse fell, riddled with bullets. Was the owner wounded by this frightful discharge? No one knew. The multitude rushed like an avalanche towards the side where man and horse had fallen, fifty paces from the royal coach. Then followed one of those tumults, such as sometimes arise around corpses, — disorderly movements, a formless chaos, a sea of cries and shouts. Suddenly, on the end of a pike they saw rising a head, crowned with white hair. It was the unfortunate Dampierre's.

The Queen screamed, and sank back into the coach.

"Monsters! Cannibals! Assassins!" shouted Charny.

"Hold your tongue, Monsieur!" said Billot, "or I can't answer for your safety."

"So be it!" said Charny. "I'm weary of life!

What worse can happen to me than to my poor brother?"

"Your brother," replied Billot, "was guilty, and you are not."

Charny made a motion to leap from his seat; but the two bodyguards held him back, and twenty weapons were thrust towards him.

"Friends," said Billot, with his strong and impressive tones, "whatever he does or says, this man," and he pointed to Charny, "I forbid you to harm a hair of his head. I must answer for him to his wife!"

"To his wife!" murmured the Queen, trembling as if one of the bayonets which threatened Charny had pierced her heart. "To his wife! And why so?"

Why? Billot could not himself have answered the question. He had invoked the name and face of Charny's wife, knowing how powerful are such domestic words over crowds of people,—made up, take them for all in all, of fathers and husbands.

CHAPTER V.

VIA DOLOROSA : STATION TWO.

THEY arrived late at Châlons. The coach drove into the courtyard of the superintendent's house, for couriers had been sent ahead to prepare lodgings. The courtyard was filled with National Guardsmen and newsmongers. It was necessary to make spectators stand aside, before the King could step out of his carriage. First he alighted. Then came the Queen, carrying the Dauphin in her arms ; then Madame Elizabeth and Madame Royale, and finally Madame de Tourzel.

The instant Louis Sixteenth set foot on the stairs leading into the house a musket was discharged, and the bullet whistled by the King's ears. Was it fired with the intention of regicide, or was it a simple accident ?

"Well," said the King, turning around with much coolness, "some awkward fellow let his gun go off!" Then he added, in a louder voice : "Take care, gentlemen, or we may have an accident !"

Without hindrance, Charny and the two bodyguards followed the royal prisoners, and entered the house behind them.

Apart from the unlucky gunshot, it already seemed to the Queen that she was in a milder atmosphere. At the door, when the tumultuous procession paused in its march, the shouts were stilled. A sort of compassionate murmur was heard when the royal family descended from their coach. When the prisoners reached the main story

of the mansion, they found dinner served as sumptuously as possible under the circumstances, and with an elegance which made them look at each other in astonishment.

Two servants were in attendance, but Charny claimed for himself and the two bodyguards the privilege of serving the table. This humble position, which otherwise might appear singular, would enable the Count to stay at the King's side, be always at his door, and so hold himself ready for any emergency.

The Queen comprehended all this; but she did not turn towards him, or reward him with a gesture, a glance, or a single word. That saying of Billot's, "I must answer for him to his wife," was muttering like an incipient storm in the depths of Marie Antoinette's heart. Charny, whom she expected to carry away from France, — whom she hoped would be expatriated with her, — Charny must now return with her to Paris, and again meet Andrée.

On his side, Charny was ignorant of what was passing in the Queen's heart. He had forgotten he had ever heard these words. Besides, he began to entertain hopeful views of the present situation.

As we know, Charny had spent much time in exploring the route from Paris to Montmédy, and had thoroughly fulfilled his duty as advance agent. He therefore understood the spirit of this village. Châlons was an old town, where there was little business, — a town inhabited by retired tradesmen, noblemen, capitalists, people holding Royalist opinions.

One consequence of this was, that hardly were the august guests seated at dinner, when their host, the legal Intendant of the Department, entered, bowing respectfully to the Queen, who, expecting nothing agreeable, looked at him suspiciously, till he said : "Madame, there are some maidens of our village of

Châlons, who beg the privilege of proffering some flowers to your Majesty."

Much surprised, the Queen turned to Madame Elizabeth and then to the King. "Flowers?" she said.

"Madame," replied the kind Intendant, "if the time is ill-chosen, or the request is too audacious, I will tell these girls not to come upstairs."

"Oh, no, no, Monsieur, but quite the opposite!" said the Queen. "Maidens? Flowers? Bring them right in!"

Then the Intendant withdrew; and in a moment a dozen girls, from fourteen to sixteen years old, appeared in the antechamber, and stopped before the open door.

"Come in, come in, my children!" cried the Queen, extending her arms.

One of the maidens — speaking not only for her companions, but for their families also, and for the whole town — had learned a beautiful little speech, which she was ready to repeat; but the Queen's welcome, her open arms, and the emotion displayed by the whole royal family so drove the address out of the poor girl's head, that it was lost in the general grief. She could find only tears, instead of the appointed words; and when she spoke, it was but to utter the commonplace sentiment: "Oh, your Majesty, what a misfortune!"

The Queen accepted the bouquet, and embraced the young girl.

While this was going on, Charny bent over the King's ear, and whispered: "Sire, perhaps something may be turned to our account in this place. All may not be lost. If your Majesty will grant me an hour's leave of absence, I'll go about the village, and afterwards render you an account of what I have seen and heard, and perhaps accomplished."

"Go, Monsieur," said the King, "but be prudent. If any misfortune happens to you, I shall never be able to console myself! Alas! It is enough that there should already be two deaths in one family!"

"Sire," responded Charny, "my life is the King's, as were the lives of my brothers!"

He left the room, but as he did so he dried a tear. It needed the presence of the royal family to make this man, with a heart so tender and true, appear as stoical as he pretended to be. When alone with himself, he was face to face with his sorrow.

"Poor Isidore!" he murmured, and pressed his hand on his breast, to see if his coat-pocket still contained the papers which Choiseul had brought to Charny from his brother's dead body, and which the Count meant to read, at the first feasible opportunity, as religiously as he would read a dying will and testament.

Behind the maidens, whom Madame Royale embraced as sisters, came their parents, who — as we have before said — were mostly old noblemen, and worthy citizens of the middle class. They entered modestly, humbly asking the privilege of paying their respects to their unhappy sovereigns. The King rose as they appeared; and in her sweetest tones the Queen bade them enter.

Were they at Châlons, or were they at Versailles? Was it possible that only a few hours had elapsed since the royal prisoners saw the unfortunate Monsieur de Dampierre torn in pieces under their very eyes?

In half an hour Charny came back. The Queen had seen him go out, and now noted his return; but the most piercing eye would have found it impossible to see in her face any indication of the effect of his exit and entrance upon her heart.

"Well?" said the King, leaning towards Charny's side.

"Well, Sire, all is for the best. The Châlons National Guards are willing to take your Majesty to Montmédy on the morrow."

"Then you have decided upon some plan?"

"Yes, Sire, with the principal leaders. To-morrow, before your departure, the King will demand the privilege of attending Mass. They cannot well refuse this request, as it is Corpus Christi Day. The coach will await the King at the church door. As he comes out to enter the coach, cheers for the King will resound; and amidst these cheers, the King will give orders to face about and drive towards Montmédy."

"Good!" said Louis. "Thanks, Monsieur de Charny. If nothing is changed before to-morrow, we will do as you say. — But go and get some repose, you and your companions, for you must need it even more than we do."

As may be easily understood, the reception of the maidens, the brave noblemen, and the good citizens did not last far into the night; and at nine the royal family retired.

When they entered their suite of chambers, the sight of a sentinel, stationed at the door, reminded both King and Queen that they were still prisoners, although the sentinel respectfully presented arms. By the precision with which he offered this homage to royalty, even though in captivity, the King saw that the sentinel was an old soldier; and so he asked: "Where have you served, my friend?"

"In the French Guards, Sire," responded the man.

"Then I am not surprised at seeing you here!" replied the King, in a dry tone; for Louis Sixteenth could not forget that on July 13, 1789, — at the time of the destruction of the Bastille nearly two years before, — the French Guards deserted to the popular side.

The royal couple entered their chambers, but this sentinel was at the very door of their bedroom.

An hour later, when relieved from guard, this sentinel asked for an interview with the chief of the escort. This chief was Billot. He was at supper in the street, with the men who had come thither from different towns along the route, and trying to persuade them to remain until the morrow; but the greater part of these volunteers, having seen what they came to see, — the King, — preferred to keep the feast of Corpus Christi in their own villages. Billot made an effort to retain them, because the Aristocratic disposition of the town worried him; but the brave rustics responded: "If we don't go home, who will celebrate the festival of the good Lord to-morrow, and hang the flags on our houses?"

This discussion was interrupted by the arrival of the sentinel, with whom Billot held a lively conversation. Then Billot sent after Drouet, and the conversation, animated and full of gestures, was renewed in a low voice. As a result of the consultation, Billot and Drouet went to the house of the post-superintendent, who was a friend of Drouet, — whose father, it will be remembered, held the same office at Sainte Menehould. The post-superintendent at once saddled two horses, and in ten minutes Billot was galloping over the road to Rheims, and Drouet over the road towards Vitry-le-Français.

By daybreak hardly six hundred men belonging to the escort remained in Châlons; and those were the fiercest or the most exhausted, who had passed the night in the streets, on bundles of straw furnished them for that purpose. By the quivering rays of the first morning light, they could see a dozen men in uniforms, going into the Intendant's house (where the King was) from which they soon hurried out again.

Some of the Villeroys troops had been stationed at Châlons. A dozen of these gentlemen were still in the village, and it was they who had come to get Charny's orders. His orders were that they should put on their uniforms, and be at the church door on horseback, when the King came from Mass; and they went away to prepare for this duty.

As we have said, many of the peasants, who had helped to form the royal escort the evening before, did not go away immediately, because they were so worn out; but in the morning they counted the leagues. Some were ten leagues (nearly thirty miles) and some were even fifteen leagues from home; so one or two hundred set out at once, in spite of the opposition of their comrades. The faithful Patriots were therefore reduced to some four hundred or four hundred and fifty men, at the most.

Charny could count on an equal number of National Guardsmen, still devoted to the King, without reckoning the Royal Guards and the other officers, who were to form a sort of sacred battalion, ready to set a brave example of exposure to every kind of danger. Besides, as we know, the town was Aristocratic.

At six in the morning, those inhabitants most zealous for the Royalist cause were standing in the courtyard of the Intendant's house. Charny and his guards were in their midst, also in waiting.

The King rose at seven o'clock, and made known his intention of attending Mass. Search was made for Drouet and Billot, to make known the King's wish, but neither of them was to be found. Nothing was therefore in the way of the accomplishment of the royal desire. Charny went up to the King's room, and announced the absence of the two popular chiefs. In this the King rejoiced, but Charny shook his head. Though

he did not know much about Drouet, he knew Billot thoroughly.

However, all the auguries proved favorable. The streets were full of people, but it was easy to see that they were sympathetic. As long as the shutters of the royal chambers were closed, the crowd circulated with quiet steps and little noise, in order not to disturb the sleep of the prisoners. They even raised their eyes and hands pitifully to Heaven. So numerous were these friendly watchers, that the four or five hundred peasants from the adjacent country, who had persisted in not returning to their own villages, seemed lost in their midst.

When the windows swung open in the chambers of the august pair, cries of "God save the King" and "God save the Queen" resounded with such energy that, without any interchange of thoughts on the subject, both Louis and Marie Antoinette appeared on their respective balconies. Then the cries became unanimous, and once more the two victims of destiny were confirmed in their illusions.

Said the King to his wife, speaking from one balcony to the other : "All seems to be going very well !" She lifted her eyes to Heaven, but did not respond.

At that moment a few strokes on the bell announced that the church was open. At the same time Charny rapped lightly on the chamber door. "All right," responded the King, "I am ready !"

Charny hastily glanced at his Majesty. He was calm and almost firm. He had suffered much, and through the force of suffering one might have said he had lost his irresolution.

The coach was at the door. The royal family entered it, surrounded by a crowd not much smaller than on the

evening before ; only, instead of insulting the prisoners, this crowd asked for a word or a look, and thought themselves happy if they could but touch the flaps of the King's coat, and were proud if they could kiss the hem of the Queen's skirts.

The three officers took their usual places on the outside seats. The coachman received orders to drive to the church, and he obeyed without a word. Indeed, who was there to give contrary orders, the two chiefs being still absent ? Charny looked searchingly in every direction, but could see nothing of Billot or Drouet.

The peasantry took their usual place around the carriage, but the number of National Guards increased every moment, coming around each street corner by companies. When they reached the church Charny estimated that he had some six hundred men at his disposal.

Places were reserved for the royal family, under a sort of canopy, and although it was only eight o'clock, the priests at once began the Mass. Perceiving this, Charny feared nothing but delay ; for delay might prove fatal to their reviving hopes. He even warned the celebrant that it was absolutely essential that the Mass should not last over fifteen minutes.

"I understand," rejoined the priest, "and I pray God to accord to their Majesties a prosperous journey."

The Mass lasted precisely the time indicated, but twenty times Charny drew out his watch. The King could hardly conceal his impatience. The Queen, on her knees between the two children, leaned her head on the cushion of the prayer-desk. Madame Elizabeth, calm and serene as an alabaster Madonna, — either because she was ignorant of the latest project, or had already commended her own and her brother's lives to God's holy keeping, — gave no sign of impatience.

At last, turning to the congregation, the priest pronounced the closing sacramental words, — which indeed originally gave the name of Mass to this important service of the Roman Catholic Church, — *Ite, missa est !* (Go, it is done !); and descending from the altar, pyx in hand, he blessed, as he passed by, the royal family, who bowed, and responded a low *Amen*, to the desire formulated in the heart of the priest. With his disappearance into the sacristy the service was over.

Then they walked towards the door. All who had come to hear the Mass with them bent the knee as the royal family passed along. Their lips moved without speaking a word, but it was easy to conjecture for what those mute lips were praying.

At the door they found ten or a dozen guards on horseback. The Royalist escort began to assume colossal proportions. It was very evident, however, that the peasants, with their burly obstinacy, with their rude weapons, less mortal, perhaps, than those of the National Guards, but more terrible to the sight, — a third of them being armed with muskets, and the rest with knives and scythes, — it was evident that these peasants would be able, in a decisive moment, to turn the scale, by throwing their fatal weight into the balance.

It was not therefore without some fear that Charny leaned towards the King, to ask his orders, and said at the same time, by way of encouragement, “Let us move on, Sire !”

The King was decided. He leaned out of the carriage and said, addressing those nearest the window : “Gentlemen, yesterday, at Varennes, I was treated with violence. I gave orders to drive to Montmédy, but by force I was dragged towards a rebellious capital ; but yesterday I was in the midst of rebels, whereas to-day I am among

loyal subjects, and I repeat my order of yesterday! — To Montmédy, gentlemen."

"To Montmédy!" cried Charny. "To Montmédy!" repeated the guardsmen of Villeroy's company. "To Montmédy!" repeated every National Guardsman belonging in Châlons. Then there went up a general chorus: "God save the King! Long live the King!"

The carriage turned the corner of the street, and started to retrace its way over the road by which it had come the evening before.

Charny kept his eye on the peasantry from the outside villages. It seemed to him, in the absence of Drouet and Billot, that these rough peasants were commanded by the same French Guardsman who had been on duty at the King's door on the night previous. Every movement this man observed silently, but with a gloomy look which indicated that he did not greatly relish the proceedings. His peasant followers shared this man's anxious dissatisfaction; but they allowed the National Guardsmen (who, it will be remembered, were here on the royal side) to go on in front, while the peasants massed themselves together, forming a rear guard as alarming as it was strong.

In the first ranks of this rear guard marched men with pikes, pitchforks, and scythes. One hundred and fifty men followed them, armed with guns. This manœuvre, as well executed as it would have been by troops accustomed to such exercises, made Charny restless; but he had no excuse for opposing it, nor could he even ask an explanation, under such circumstances.

The explanation, however, came soon enough. As they advanced towards the town gate, it seemed as if they could hear — despite the shouts and bustle which accompanied the coach, and the noise made by the

carriage itself—a dull and distant sound, which slowly increased in volume.

Suddenly Charny grew pale. Touching the knee of the bodyguard next him he said: “All is lost!”

“Why so?” asked the bodyguard.

“Don’t you know that noise?”

“The drum-beat? What then?”

“Well, you ’ll see!” said Charny.

At that instant they turned a corner, into a square where two roads met,—one leading from Rheims, and the other from Vitry-le-Français. Through these two streets, with drums beating and flags waving, advanced two large companies of National Guards, one numbering some eighteen hundred, and the other from twenty-five hundred to three thousand. Each of these companies was commanded by a man on horseback. One of these was Billot; the other was Drouet. Charny needed only to note the direction followed by each troop, in order to understand everything. The absence of Drouet and Billot, heretofore inexplicable, was now explained but too clearly. Forewarned of the blow planned at Châlons, they had undoubtedly started off suddenly, one to hasten the approach of the National Guards from Rheims, and the other to call out the National Guards at Vitry-le-Français. Their measures being well concerted, both companies arrived at the same time. They ordered their men to halt in the square, which was thus entirely closed up. Without any other demonstration, the order was given to load their guns.

The royal party paused. The King put his head out of the window. He saw Charny with his face pale and his teeth clenched.

“What is it?” asked the King.

“Our enemies have obtained reinforcements. They

are there, facing us, with their guns loaded. Moreover, in the rear of the Châlons Guards, who are our friends, are those terrible peasants, with their guns also loaded."

"What do you think of it, Monsieur de Charny?"

"I think we are between two fires. That will not prevent our pressing on, if you say the word, Sire; but how far your Majesty would go, I dare not say."

"Very well, let us go back!" said the King.

"Your Majesty has so decided?"

"Already too much blood has been spilled for me, blood which I mourn with bitter tears. I do not wish a drop more should be shed. — We will return, I say."

At these words the two young fellows on the outside seats jumped down to the doors, and the Villeroy Guards ran up. These brave and ambitious military men asked nothing better than to have a fight with the common people; but the King repeated his order, more positively than before.

"Gentlemen," said Charny, in a high and imperative voice, "let us return! The King so commands." Himself grasping the bridle of one horse, he had the heavy coach turned square about.

At the gate leading towards Paris, the Châlons National Guards, being no longer of any use, gave up their places to the peasants, and to the National Guards from Vitry and Rheims.

"Do you think I have done right, Madame?" asked Louis of Marie Antoinette.

"Yes, Monsieur," responded she; "but I think Monsieur de Charny obeyed you very readily."

So speaking, she fell into a gloomy reverie, which had little to do with the situation in which they found themselves, terrible as it seemed.

CHAPTER VI.

VIA DOLOROSA : STATION THREE.

THE coach was following sadly the road to Paris, under the supervision of the two forbidding men who compelled the royal party to retrace their steps, when between Épernay and Dormans, Charny — thanks to his stature, as well as the elevation of the seat which he occupied — saw another carriage coming from Paris at full gallop, drawn by four posthorses.

Charny immediately guessed that this carriage was bringing some grave news, or contained some important personage. When this carriage met the advance guard of the escort, two or three words were exchanged, and then the ranks were opened, and the advance men respectfully presented arms. The King's carriage halted, and loud cries were heard, myriad voices repeating at the same time : " Hurrah for the National Assembly ! " The arriving carriage then continued on its way, till it was abreast of the royal coach, when three men, two of whom were completely unknown to the august prisoners, descended from it.

The third had hardly shown his head at the window when the Queen murmured in her husband's ear : " Monsieur de Latour Maubourg, the tool of Lafayette ! " Then she added, with a dubious shake of the head : " This presages no good for us ! "

The eldest of the three men came forward, and brutally pulled open the door of the royal carriage, as he

said: "I'm Pétion; and here are Barnave and Latour Maubourg, who are sent, like myself, on the part of the National Assembly, to serve as your escort, and see that the anger of the people does n't make them take the law into their own hands. Squeeze up a little, and make room for us."

The Queen shot upon the Chartres Deputy and his two companions one of those disdainful glances which sometimes fell from the lofty pride of the daughter of Maria Theresa. Latour Maubourg, a courteous gentleman of the Lafayette school, could not endure this look; so he said: "Their Majesties are already crowded in this coach. As for me, I'll go in the second carriage."

"Ride where you please," said Pétion. "As for me, my place is in this coach, with the King and Queen!" and thus speaking, he stepped into their carriage.

In the rear seat were the King, Queen, and Madame Elizabeth. Pétion looked from one to the other. Then he said to Madame Elizabeth: "Excuse me, Madame, but, as representative of the Assembly, the place of honor belongs to me. Be kind enough to rise and take the front seat."

"What a speech!" murmured the Queen.

"Monsieur!" said the King.

"Certainly!" said Pétion. "Come, Madame, get up, and give me your place."

Madame Elizabeth rose and yielded her place, making a sign of resignation to her sister-in-law and brother.

Meanwhile Maubourg slipped away, and asked a place with the two ladies in their cabriolet; but he did so with more courtesies than Pétion vouchsafed to the royal family. Barnave remained outside, hesitating to jam into a carriage already uncomfortably crowded with seven persons.

"Well, Barnave," said Pétion, "are n't you coming?"

"But where can you put me?" said Barnave, somewhat embarrassed.

"Would you like my place?" asked the Queen, sharply.

"I thank you, Madame," responded Barnave, feeling wounded, "but the other seat is good enough for me."

Madame Elizabeth drew Madame Royale nearer to herself, while the Queen took the Dauphin on her knees. In this way they made room on the front seat, and Barnave found himself face to face with the Queen, and knee to knee.

"Now we're ready, so go ahead!" said Pétion, without asking the King's permission; and the procession moved on once more, amidst cheers for the National Assembly.

In the personality of Barnave and Pétion, the People now rode in the royal chariot, for they had won their right so to do on the Fourteenth of July and the Fifth and Sixth of October.

There was a moment of silence, which each of the travellers gave to self-examination, — except Pétion, who was so encased in rudeness as to seem indifferent to everybody. Let us take the opportunity to say a few words about the personages now brought more intimately upon the scene.

Jerome Pétion, often called De Villeneuve, was a man of about thirty-two, with vigorous traits of character. His sole merit lay in the elevation, purity, and integrity of his political principles. He was born at Chartres, where he was admitted to practice as an advocate, and then sent to Paris as a Deputy to the National Assembly, in 1789. He was destined in a few months to be elected Mayor of Paris, and to enjoy a popularity which eclipsed that of either Bailly or Lafayette; and it was subsequently his fate to die in the woods of Bordeaux, perhaps

devoured by wolves. His friends called him the Honest Pétion. He and Camille Desmoulins were already Republicans, when nobody else in France as yet proclaimed those principles.

Pierre Joseph Marie Barnave was born at Grenoble, and was now hardly thirty years old. Being elected to the National Assembly, he at once acquired a great reputation and wide-spread popularity, by entering the lists with Mirabeau, when the reputation and popularity of the Deputy from Aix were waning. All the enemies of the great orator, — and Mirabeau rejoiced in the usual privilege of men of genius, that of making an enemy of mediocrity, — Mirabeau's enemies were sure to be Barnave's friends, and they sustained him, encouraged him, stimulated him, in the stormy fights which accompanied the last days of the illustrious tribune.

He was — we speak of Barnave — a young man of hardly thirty at this period, and did not appear over twenty-five, with his blue eyes, his large mouth, his sharp voice, and his upturned nose. In person he was elegant. Aggressive and a duellist, he seemed like some young military captain in the garb of a tradesman. His aspect was cool, hard, and sinister; but he was better than his looks indicated. He belonged to the party of Royal Constitutionalists.

While he was taking his place in the forward seat, opposite the Queen, the King said: "Gentlemen, I begin at once by telling you, it was never my intention to quit the kingdom."

Barnave, half seated, stopped, and looked at the King. "Are you speaking the truth, Sire?" he asked. "If so, that assertion may save France!" and then he sat down.

Now something strange passed between that man, a

middle-class citizen from a small provincial city, and that woman, descended from one of the greatest dynasties in the world, and occupying half of one of its grandest thrones. Each tried to read the other's heart, not like two enemies, trying to discover state secrets, but like a man and woman, probing the mysteries of passionate love.

Whence came to Barnave's heart this surprising sentiment, which the piercing eye of Marie Antoinette discovered after a few minutes of study? This is what we are going to tell, bringing to light one of those heart-tablets which belong to the secret legends of history, but outweigh a legion of the official documents which refer to the great crises of destiny.

Barnave was ambitious to be, in all things, the successor and heir of Mirabeau. In his own mind, the mantle of the great orator had already fallen upon his shoulders. One point, however, was not yet scored. In the eyes of all — though we know how little there was in the prevalent opinion — Mirabeau had the reputation of being specially honored by the confidence of the King and the good-will of the Queen. The single audience, which took place at the palace of Saint Cloud, was exaggerated into several secret conferences, in which Mirabeau's presumption was represented as reaching the point of audacity, and the condescension of the Queen as amounting to feebleness; for at that day it was the fashion, not only to slander poor Marie Antoinette, but also to *believe* such calumnies.

Now Barnave's ambition was to be in all things Mirabeau's successor; and on this account he had procured his nomination as one of the three commissioners sent to meet the King. Being so appointed, he came hither with the self-assurance of a man who knows that he has

power to inspire hatred, even if he lacks the talent to make himself loved.

Nearly all this the Queen was able to read, with a glance of her feminine eye; and she divined one thing more, — the actual preoccupation of Barnave with herself. Five or six times in the space of the first quarter-hour while Barnave was face to face with her, the young Deputy examined, with scrupulous attention, the three men who were on the rear outside seat of the coach; and after each glance his look became harder and more hostile towards the Queen. The fact was, Barnave knew that one of these three men — but which, he was not sure — was Charny, and public gossip gave Charny the credit of being the Queen's absolute lover.

So much the Queen surmised, and from the moment of this surmise she was stronger; for she now knew the flaw in her adversary's coat of mail, and she had only to strike home when she chose.

"Monsieur," she said, addressing the King, "you heard what the man said who directs our journey?"

"On what subject, Madame?" asked the King.

"In regard to Monsieur de Charny."

Barnave trembled; and this tremor did not escape the notice of the Queen, whose knee was in contact with his.

"Did n't he declare," said the King, "that he took upon himself the responsibility of the Count's life?"

"Precisely, Monsieur; and he added, that he must answer for him to the Countess."

Barnave half closed his eyes, but listened so as not to lose a syllable of what the Queen was saying.

"What then?" asked the King.

"Well, Monsieur, the Count's wife is my old friend, Andrée de Taverney. Don't you think it will be well, on our return to Paris, if I give leave of absence to

Monsieur de Charny, so that he may comfort his wife? He has run great risks. His youngest brother was killed in our defence. I think that to ask a continuation of his services in the royal household, Sire, would be a cruel separation of a loving pair."

Barnave breathed hard and reopened his eyes.

"You are right, Madame," responded the King; "though, to tell the truth, I doubt if Charny will accept this dismissal."

"In that case, Sire," said the Queen, "we shall all of us have done our duty, — we in offering him leave of absence, and Charny in refusing it."

As by some magnetic influence the Queen turned aside Barnave's irritation; and at the same time his generous heart accused himself of injustice towards this woman, and he felt ashamed as he looked her in the face. Hitherto Barnave had held his head high and insolent, like a magistrate before a culprit, whom he has the right to judge and condemn; but now that culprit, responding to his mental accusation, which she could not have guessed, spoke a word which was the outcome either of innocence or regret; and why not of innocence?

"We should do this all the more," continued the Queen, "because we did not mean to carry Monsieur de Charny forever with us; and, as for me, I supposed him to be quiet in Paris, when I suddenly saw him appear at the door of our coach."

"True," said the King; "and that shows you that the Count has no need to be stimulated in the performance of what he believes to be his duty."

She was innocent, — there was no doubt of it! Oh how glad Barnave would have been to ask pardon of the *Queen*, for his evil thoughts about the *woman*.

Should he speak to the Queen? He dared not. Wait

till the Queen first spoke to him ? But the Queen, satisfied with the effect produced by the few words already spoken, said nothing more.

Barnave had become amiable, almost humble. With a look he implored her regard ; but she appeared to take no notice of him.

This young man was in a nervously ecstatic condition, when, to attract the notice of an indifferent woman, he would have undertaken the twelve labors of Hercules, at the risk of being overcome by the first.

He begged the Supreme Being, — in 1791 they no longer asked anything of God, — he begged the Supreme Being to send him some occasion for drawing towards himself the notice of this royal icicle, when suddenly — as if the Supreme Being had heard this silent prayer which had been raised to him — a poor priest, who was waiting on the side of the road for a chance of seeing the august prisoners, raised his suppliant hands and tear-filled eyes to Heaven, and exclaimed : “ Sire, God watch over your Majesty ! ”

It was some time since the rabble had found any pretext for wrath, or any object to vent it upon. No similar occasion had presented itself since they had torn in pieces the old Chevalier of Saint Louis, whose head was still borne in the procession, on the end of a pike. Another such occasion now offered itself, and they earnestly seized it.

To the old priest's gesture, and the blessing he invoked, the rabble responded by hooting. In an instant they threw themselves on the priest, and before Barnave came out of his revery, the priest was thrown down, and was likely to be slashed into pieces, when the frightened Queen cried out to Barnave : “ Oh Monsieur, don't you see what they 're doing ? ”

Barnave raised his head, glanced at the human ocean wherein the poor priest had almost disappeared, and which was surging in tumultuous and growling waves about the coach.

Seeing what was the matter he exclaimed : "You wretches !" and threw himself so violently against the door that it flew open, and he would have tumbled out, if by one of the customary prompt movements of Madame Elizabeth's heart, she had not caught him by the flap of his coat.

"You tigers !" he went on. "You're no longer Frenchmen ! Have the French people, once so brave, become assassins ?"

To us this apostrophe may seem somewhat pretentious, but it was in accordance with the taste of the times. Besides, Barnave represented the National Assembly. By his voice the supreme power of the State was speaking. The rabble recoiled and the old priest was saved.

He rose, saying : "You have done well to save me, young man ; an old man will pray for you !" and making the sign of the cross, he went away.

The rabble let him pass, controlled by Barnave's gesture and look, for the Deputy seemed like a statue of Law and Order.

When the old man was far away, the young Deputy reseated himself naturally and contentedly, — not with the air of a man who knows that he has saved another man's life.

"I thank you, Monsieur !" said the Queen ; and these few words thrilled Barnave through and through.

Beyond contradiction, during all the long period in which we have kept company with the unhappy Marie Antoinette, she was never more touching than now,

though she had been more beautiful. Instead of being enthroned as a Queen, she was now enthroned as a mother.

On her left was the Dauphin, a charming child with blond hair, who had moved, with all the carelessness of his age, from the lap of his mother to the knees of the virtuous Pétion, who was still sufficiently human to play with the child's curly locks.

At her right was her daughter, Madame Royale, who seemed like a portrait of her mother in the flower of her youth and beauty.

Marie Antoinette herself, instead of a crown of royal gold, wore a crown of misery's thorns. Above her black eyes and white forehead, in the midst of her magnificent blond hair, glistened a few silvery threads, which had come prematurely, and which spoke more eloquently to the heart of the young Deputy than the most plaintive verbal appeal could have done. He contemplated this royal grace, and was ready to fall on his knees before this waning Majesty, when the young Dauphin uttered a cry of pain.

The child had annoyed the virtuous Pétion with some little act of playfulness, which Pétion thought proper to punish by a vigorous pull of the boy's ear.

The King grew red with anger, and the Queen grew white with mortification. She extended her arms, and took the little fellow from Pétion's knees; and as Barnave started to do the same thing, the Dauphin was lifted by their four arms, and being drawn towards Barnave, found himself on that gentleman's knees.

Marie Antoinette wished to draw the child into her own lap again, but the little fellow said, "No, I am very comfortable here!" and as Barnave, who saw the Queen's purpose, separated his arms to let her carry it into

execution, she — was it through the coquetry of the mother or the seductiveness of the woman? — left the young prince where he was.

At that moment there was an indescribable feeling in Barnave's heart. He was both proud and happy, all at once.

The child began to play with Barnave's shirt-frill, then with his belt, and finally with the buttons on the coat of his uniform as Deputy.

These buttons specially attracted the boy, for they bore a graven device. The Dauphin read the letters, one after the other; and then, putting them together, he made out these four words: *Live free, or die.*

"What does that mean, Monsieur?" he asked.

Barnave hesitated how to reply; but Pétion explained it: "That means, little chap, that the French people have sworn never to have another master. Do you understand that?"

"Pétion!" cried Barnave.

"Well," replied Pétion, as naturally as possible, "explain the device otherwise, if it *has* any other meaning."

Barnave was silent. That device, which last evening seemed sublime to him, appeared cruel in their present situation; but he took the Dauphin's hand, and kissed it respectfully.

The Queen wiped away a furtive tear, which had crept from her heart to her eyelids.

The coach, the scene of this strange little drama, — simple to the point of juvenility, — continued to roll along, amidst the growling of the crowd, — bearing to their deaths six of the eight persons it contained.

Presently they reached Dormans.

CHAPTER VII.

VIA DOLOROSA : STATION FOUR.

AT Dormans nothing had been prepared for the reception of the royal family, who were therefore forced to stop at an inn.

Either by the order of Pétion, whom the reticence of the royal couple had deeply wounded during the journey, or else because the tavern was really full, there were only three attics in which the august prisoners could install themselves.

As they dismounted, Charny, according to his custom, wished to approach the King and Queen, and receive their orders ; but by a glance the Queen indicated to him that he was to remain aloof. Without knowing the cause of this unspoken command, the Count hastened to obey.

It was Pétion who first entered the inn, and took upon himself the duties of quarter-master. He did not give himself the trouble of coming out again, but left it for one of the servants to announce to the royal family that their rooms were in readiness.

Barnave was greatly embarrassed. He was dying with anxiety to get out next, and so offer his arm to the Queen ; but he feared lest the woman who had formerly jeered at etiquette, in the person of Madame de Noailles, might also laugh at him ; so Barnave relinquished his purpose, and only waited.

First the King left the coach, leaning on the arms of his two bodyguards, Malden and Valory. As has been already stated, Charny stood apart, at a sign from Marie Antoinette.

Then the Queen stepped out, and extended her arms to take the Dauphin ; but as if the poor child had an intuitive sense of the benefit his mother might derive from such tact and flattery, he said : " No, I want to stay with my friend Barnave."

Marie Antoinette nodded assent, accompanied by a pleasant smile. Barnave waited for Madame Elizabeth and Madame Royale to alight ; and then he followed them, still holding the Dauphin.

Madame de Tourzel came next, hoping to reclaim her royal pupil from the plebeian hands which held him ; but a new sign from the Queen calmed the aristocratic ardor of the governess of France's royal children.

The Queen mounted the winding and slippery stairs, leaning on her husband's arm. At the main story she paused, supposing that twenty stairs must be far enough ; but the waiter cried, " Higher, higher !" and on this adjuration she continued to ascend.

Barnave's forehead perspired with shame. " What, higher ? " he asked.

" Yes," said the waiter. " On this story are only the dining-room, and the apartments for the gentlemen from the National Assembly."

Barnave's eyes gleamed with anger. Pétion had reserved the main apartments on the second story for himself and colleagues, and had relegated the royal family to the third, or upper story. However, the young Deputy said nothing ; but, dreading the Queen's first movement, when she should see the mansard chambers, — destined for herself and her family by Pétion, — when

he reached the upper staircase, Barnave set the child down on the landing.

"Madame, Madame!" cried the little prince to his mother, "my friend Barnave is going away."

"He does well," said the Queen, laughingly, as she glanced at their new apartments.

As we have said, in this suite there were only three small rooms, connected together.

The Queen took possession of the first, with Madame Royale. The second was taken by Madame Elizabeth, for herself, the Dauphin, and Madame de Tourzel. The third — which was little more than a closet, with a side door opening upon the stairway — was left for the King.

As Louis was tired he wished to lie down a few minutes, while waiting for supper; but the bed was so short, that he was presently obliged to get up again. Opening the door, he called for a chair. Malden and Valory were already at their post on the staircase. Malden, who was nearest the door, went down, took a chair from the dining-room, and brought it up to the King. There was already one wooden chair in his closet; so Louis arranged the second chair, brought him by Malden, in such a way as to make the bed long enough to accommodate his height.

"Oh Sire!" said Malden, clasping his hands and sadly shaking his head, "can you manage to pass the night in this way?"

"Certainly, Monsieur," said the King. Then he added: "If the cries which reach my ears about my people are true, how many of my subjects would rejoice even in this closet, with its bedstead and two chairs!" and he stretched himself on this improvised couch, a prelude to the long days of privation in the Temple, where he was afterwards imprisoned.

An instant later somebody came to say that supper was spread for their Majesties. The King went downstairs, and saw that the table was laid for six.

"Why are there six plates?" he asked.

The waiter replied: "There is one for the King, one for the Queen, one for Madame Elizabeth, one for Madame Royale, one for Monseigneur the Dauphin, and one for Monsieur Pétion."

"And why not one for Monsieur Barnave and one for Monsieur Latour Maubourg?" asked the King, sarcastically.

"So there were, Sire," replied the waiter; "but Monsieur Barnave ordered them taken away."

"And left Monsieur Pétion's?"

"Monsieur Pétion so insisted."

Just then the more than grave face — the austere face — of the Chartres Deputy appeared, framed in the doorway. The King seemed not to notice him, and said to the waiter: "I never go to the table, except with my family. We eat only together, or with those whom we invite. Otherwise we never sit down."

"I was well aware," said Pétion, "that his Majesty had forgotten the first article of the Declaration of Human Rights; but I supposed he might *pretend* to remember it."

The King pretended not to hear Pétion, as he had pretended not to see him, and, with a movement of his eyes and brow, ordered the waiter to lift the covers. The waiter obeyed, and Pétion went away in a furious mood.

"Monsieur de Malden," said the King, "shut the door, so that we may be alone, if possible."

Malden also obeyed, and Pétion heard the door close behind him. So the King really had a family dinner,

the two bodyguards serving him, as was now their custom.

As to Charny, he did not appear. If no longer the Queen's cavalier, he was still her slave; but there were moments when his passive obedience grieved her woman's heart, and during the supper she impatiently looked for him; for she wished, after obeying her momentarily, that he would begin to disobey.

As supper ended, and the King pushed back his chair, to rise from the table, the door opened, and the waiter came in to beg their Majesties, in the name of Monsieur Barnave, to occupy his apartments on the main floor, in place of their own attics.

Louis and Marie Antoinette looked at each other. Should they stand upon their dignity, and repel the courtesy of one, in order to resent the impertinence of the other? Perhaps this was in the King's mind; but the Dauphin ran into the parlor, calling: "Where is my friend Barnave?"

The Queen followed her boy, and the King followed his wife; but Barnave was not in the parlor. Thence she went into the bedrooms, and found there were three, as in the attic above. Though not elegantly furnished, they were comfortable. To be sure, the candles burned in copper candelabra, but there were plenty of them.

Two or three times during the day's journey the Queen expressed her delight as they passed beautiful flower-gardens. Now she found her chamber embellished with the most beautiful blossoms of summer, while at the same time the open windows permitted the too pungent odors to escape. Muslin curtains, across the openings of the windows, shielded the fair prisoner from all indiscreet eyes.

It was Barnave who had taken all this care. She

sighed, the poor Queen; for six years earlier it was Charny who attended to all these little matters in her behalf. However, Barnave had delicacy enough not to present himself for thanks. This also was precisely like Charny. How was it that a petty country lawyer could be as delicate and devoted in his attentions, as the most distinguished and elegant gentleman of her Court? In all this there was much to make any woman dream, even if that woman was a queen; and Marie Antoinette did dream over this mystery, during a considerable part of the night.

Meanwhile, what had become of Count Charny? As we have seen, he quietly withdrew at a sign from the Queen, and did not reappear. Although duty enchained him to the steps of Louis Sixteenth and Marie Antoinette, Charny was rejoiced at his dismissal by the Queen, — not even asking the cause of it, — because it gave him some time for solitude and reflection. Throughout the last three days he had lived at lightning speed. He had lived outside of himself, so to speak, — lived so entirely for others, that he was not sorry to drop their burdens awhile, and think of his own sorrows.

He was a gentleman of the old school, and the head of his family. He adored his brothers, to whom he was rather a father than an elder brother.

At George's death the Count's grief had been very great; but at least he had been able to kneel over George's dead body, in that small and dark courtyard at Versailles, and expend his grief in tears; and then there remained to him his second brother, to whom his entire affection was transferred, — Isidore, who had become dearer to him than before, if that were possible, during the months of Olivier's absence at Metz, — and

preceding his final departure with the King, — when the younger man had acted as a go-between for the Count and Andrée.

Though we cannot fully explain the mystery, we have tried to show how certain hearts grow warmer, instead of colder, when they are separated, as if absence furnished fresh material for memory to dwell upon. Even a certain English poet has said: "Absence makes the heart grow fonder."

The less Charny saw of Andrée the more he thought about her; and to think more and more of Andrée, was to love her.

Indeed, when he was near Andrée, when he saw Andrée, it seemed to him purely and simply as if he were near a statue of ice, who would melt at the least touch of the rays of love's amorous sunshine, and who retired into the shade, as if fearful lest the sun should find her out. When they met he was brought into contact with her cool and moderate gestures, with her grave and careful reticence, with her voiceless and veiled look. Behind her gestures, behind her words, behind her glances he did not penetrate, — or, to speak more accurately, he caught a glimpse of nothing. Her whole personality seemed white, pale, and dull as alabaster, and as cold and impenetrable.

Except at rare intervals of animation, brought about by painful situations, it was thus Andrée always appeared during their latter interviews, and especially in the interview he had with that unhappy woman, in her pavilion in Rue Coq Héron, the evening when she recovered and again lost her son; though of her relation to Sebastien, her husband was utterly ignorant.

When away from her, distance produced its usual effect, and lent "enchantment to the view," by softening

the more glaring colors and smoothing the sharper edges. Then Andrée's languid and frigid motions seemed to him more vivacious. Then her calm and subdued voice became sonorous as a bell. Then her quiet and shy glances gave place to a passionate and kindling flame, which shot from beneath her long lashes. Then it seemed as if an interior fire illuminated the soul of this statue, through whose alabaster flesh he could see the circling blood and palpitating heart.

It was in these moments of solitude that Andrée became indeed and in truth the Queen's rival in Charny's heart. In the feverish obscurity of night Charny would behold the walls of his chamber open and the tapestry recede; and then he would behold this transparent statue, — the flame in her soul radiating light all around her, — approach his bed with extended arms, whispering lips, and an eye moist with love. Then Charny also would extend his arms; then he would speak to the sweet vision; then he would try to press the phantom to his heart; but, alas! the phantom always escaped him; he embraced only vacancy, and sank from his elusive dream into the sad and cold reality.

Isidore had become more dear to Charny than ever George had been; and, as we know, the Count had not even the melancholy joy of weeping over Isidore's dead body, as he had over George's. Both, one after the other, had died for that fateful woman, — for that monarchical cause, so full of pitfalls. For the same woman, and into a similar abyss, Charny must certainly fall in his turn.

For two days since the death of his brother, since their last interview, which left his garments stained with Isidore's blood, and his lips warm with the victim's last sigh, since the hour when Choiseul placed in the Count's

hands the papers discovered on Isidore's body, Charny had hardly found a moment in which he could give way to his personal grief.

The Queen's gesture, which bade him remain away from her, he had welcomed as a favor, and accepted with joy. Thereafter he searched for some corner, some nook, some retreat, where he could be near the royal door, ready to aid the royal family at the first appeal, the first outcry, and nevertheless be alone with his sorrow, in privacy with his tears.

Now he found an attic room, situated at the top of the staircase, where we saw Malden and Valory on duty. Once there, alone and shut away from the world, — seated before a table, lighted by one of those copper lamps, with three burners, which are still to be found in old country-houses, — he drew from his pocket those blood-stained papers, his sole relics of his brother.

With his forehead in his hands, and his eyes fixed on these letters, containing the thoughts of him who was no more, Charny took no note of time, while the overflowing and silent tears fell from his cheeks to the table.

At last he sighed, raised his head, took up one letter, and opened it. It was from poor Catherine. For several months Charny had suspected his brother's relations to the farmer's daughter; and Billot had related to the Count further details thereof, in their interview at Varennes; but it was not till after listening to the farmer's recital that he gave to the affair the importance it deserved, and allowed it to influence his mind.

This interest was increased by the perusal of this letter. Therein he saw how the title of mistress had been rendered sacred by the title of mother; and in the simple terms by which Catherine acknowledged her

love, he could see that the whole life of the woman must expiate the fault of the girl.

A second letter he opened, and then a third. In each there were the same plans for the future, the same hopes of happiness, the same maternal joys, the same loving fears, the same griefs, the same regrets.

In the midst of these letters Charny suddenly came upon one whose handwriting impressed him strangely. It was Andrée's writing, for she herself had written the superscription. To this letter a square folded paper was attached by a waxen seal, which bore Isidore's coat of arms. This letter, in Andrée's writing, — addressed to Charny, yet found among Isidore's papers, — appeared to the Count so singular, that he began by opening the annexed billet, before opening the letter itself.

This billet was written in pencil, probably on some tavern table, while they were saddling a horse, and contained the following lines :

This letter is not addressed to me, but to my brother, Count Olivier. It is written by his wife, the Countess.

If anything happens to me, whoever finds this paper is requested to send it to my brother, or else return it to the Countess.

I received it from her with the following instructions:

If in the enterprise in which we are engaged the Count is successful, and no mishap befalls him, the letter is to be returned to the Countess.

If he is grievously wounded, but not unto death, he is to be requested to grant his wife the favor of letting her come to him.

Finally, if he is wounded unto death, this letter is to be given him ; and if he cannot read it himself, it is to be read to him, in order that he may know, before he dies, the secret it contains.

If her letter is sent to my brother Olivier, undoubtedly he

will receive this note at the same time, and he will act in regard to these three requests as his sense of delicacy may dictate.

I commend to his care poor Catherine Billot, who lives in the town of Ville-d'Avray, with my babe.

ISIDORE DE CHARNY.

At first the Count appeared entirely absorbed in the perusal of his brother's letter. His tears, which had been dried for a moment, began once more to roll down his cheeks in abundance. Then he once more turned his misty eyes to Madame de Charny's letter. After a long look he carried it to his lips, and pressed it against his heart, as if thus it might communicate the secret it contained. Then he again read — once, twice, thrice — the requests Isidore's note contained, and said, in a low voice, shaking his head: "I have no right to open this letter, but I will supplicate her to let me read it."

As if to encourage himself in this resolution, impossible to a heart less loyal than his, he repeated his words: "No, I will not read it!"

Indeed he did not read it; but daylight surprised him sitting at the same table, devouring with his gaze the superscription on that letter, damp with his breath, so often had he pressed it to his lips.

Suddenly, amidst the noise in the tavern announcing preparations for departure, he heard Malden's voice calling him.

"I am here!" responded the Count; and pressing poor Isidore's papers once more into his coat-pocket, he again kissed the unopened letter, placed it near his heart, and hastened down the stairs.

On the way he met Barnave, who was asking how fared the Queen, and bidding Valory get her orders as to the hour of departure. It was easy to see that

Barnave had not been abed, and had slept no more than Charny himself.

The two men saluted each other, and Charny must surely have noted the jealous light in Barnave's eyes, while the Deputy inquired about the Queen's health, if he had been able to think of anything except that letter, against which his heart was beating.

CHAPTER VIII.

VIA DOLOROSA : STATION FIVE.

WHEN they again entered their carriage the King and Queen saw with surprise that only the population of the town were there to witness their departure, and only cavalry to accompany the royal coach.

Here was another attention from Barnave. He remembered that the day before, being forced to travel so far and at such a slow rate of speed, the Queen had greatly suffered from heat, dust, and insects, and also from the multitude, who had menaced the royal guards, and ill-treated those faithful adherents who came to bestow upon royalty a last salutation; so he pretended to have received warning of an invasion, — that General Bouillé was about re-entering France with fifty thousand Austrians; and that to contend against this danger every man would be needed who had a musket, a scythe, a pike, or any other weapon. Thereupon the rabble, hearing this appeal, started back towards their own homes.

There was at that era in France a deep-seated hatred of foreigners, a hatred so powerful that it even overbore the hatred these men had vowed towards the King and Queen, — especially towards the Queen, whose greatest crime lay in the fact that she was foreign-born.

Marie Antoinette guessed from whom this blessed relief had emanated. We say *blessed* relief, for the word is not too strong; and she thanked Barnave with a grateful glance.

As she resumed her place in the coach she looked for Charny. He was already on his outside seat; only, instead of sitting in the middle, as on the previous day, between the two bodyguards, he now insisted upon giving this position to Monsieur de Malden, which was somewhat less exposed than the one previously occupied by that faithful gentleman.

In truth Charny really hoped that some wound would give him an excuse for opening his Countess's letter, which still burned against his heart. He did not see that the Queen was trying to catch his eye; but she heaved a deep sigh, which Barnave noted.

Anxious to learn the cause of this sigh, the young Deputy paused on the carriage steps, and said: "Madame, I yesterday noticed that you were much discommoded in the coach. One person less will give you more elbow-room. If you wish it, I will ride in the other carriage, with Monsieur de Latour Maubourg, or I can accompany you on horseback."

Although he made this offer, Barnave would have given half the remnant of his days — and not many remained to him — to have the offer refused; and it *was* refused.

"No!" said the Queen, quickly, "stay with us!" and the Dauphin exclaimed, extending his little hands, in order to draw the young Deputy towards himself: "My friend Barnave! My friend Barnave! I won't have thee go away from us."

Barnave was radiant, as he took his former place in the coach. Hardly was he seated when the Dauphin, of his own accord, slipped from his mother's lap to Barnave's knees. As she let him do so, she kissed the little fellow on both cheeks.

The warm trace of her lips was imprinted on the child's velvety cheek. Barnave watched this trace of maternal

love, as Tantalus might have looked at the forbidden fruit suspended above his head.

“Madame,” he said to the Queen, “will your Majesty deign to accord me the privilege of embracing the august prince, who, guided by the infallible instinct of childhood, has called me his friend ?”

The Queen smilingly assented. Then Barnave’s lips glued themselves with such ardor to the spot where the Queen’s lips had rested, that the child uttered a little cry of annoyance.

Nothing of all this byplay was lost upon the Queen. Perhaps she had slept no better than Barnave and Charny ; perhaps the animation which lighted her eyes was caused by the fever which burned within ; but her lips were covered with a warm purple, her cheeks with a rosy tint almost imperceptible, transforming her into a dangerous siren, capable, with a single hair from her beautiful head, of drawing her deluded worshippers into an unfathomable and seething whirlpool.

Thanks to Barnave’s precautions the carriage rolled along at the rate of two leagues (nearly six miles) an hour.

At Château Thierry they stopped for dinner: The mansion where they halted was by a river, on a charming site, and belonged to a rich woman who traded in wood, and who had not really expected that her house would be so honored. Nevertheless, the evening before, learning that the royal family was to pass through Château Thierry, she had sent one of her clerks, on horseback, to offer the Assembly Delegates, and also the King and Queen, the hospitalities of her home ; and the invitation was graciously accepted.

As soon as the carriage stopped, a respectful concourse of attendants indicated to the august prisoners a very

different reception from that to which they had been subjected the night before, at the inn in Dormans. The King, the Queen, Madame Elizabeth, Madame de Tourzel, and the two children were conducted into separate chambers, where every preparation had been made, so that each could make as careful a toilet as fastidiousness might prompt.

Not since her departure from Paris had the Queen found anything like this thoughtfulness. Her most delicate womanly habits were anticipated by this refined attention; and as Marie Antoinette began to appreciate such attentions, she asked for her kind hostess, that she might thank the lady.

Soon a woman of forty years, but still blooming, and dressed with extreme simplicity, presented herself. She had been thoughtful enough not to intrude upon her guests.

"You are the mistress of the mansion, Madame?" asked the Queen.

"Oh Madame!" cried this excellent woman, melting into tears, "wherever her Majesty deigns to stop, in whatever house is honored by her presence, — wherever the Queen may be, — the Queen is always the sole mistress."

Marie Antoinette looked about the chamber, to see if they were quite alone. Sure that nobody else could see or hear her, she took the lady's hand, drew her towards herself, and said, while she embraced her as a friend: "If you care for our peace of mind, and have any regard for your own safety, calm yourself and moderate your expressions of grief; for if the cause of your tears is perceived, they might be very harmful to you. You must understand that if any misfortune should happen to you, it would increase our troubles. Perhaps we may meet

again. Restrain yourself, and think of me as a friend, to whom our meeting to-day is both precious and rare."

From the narrative of one of the bodyguards, who aided in the royal flight and was the King's companion, we copy these very words, spoken by Marie Antoinette.

After dinner they again set forth. The heat increased. Seeing that Madame Elizabeth, overcome with fatigue, had several times let her head fall upon her bosom, in spite of all she could do to keep awake, the King insisted that she should take the more comfortable back seat as far as Meaux, where they were to sleep; but only at his express order would Madame Elizabeth consent.

Pétion heard all this conversation without proffering his place. Purple with shame, Barnave hid his face in his hands, but through the openings of his fingers he could see the Queen's melancholy smile.

At the end of an hour's journey Madame Elizabeth's weariness became so uncontrollable that she suddenly fell asleep, so entirely losing consciousness that her angelic head, after nodding right and left, ended by reposing on Pétion's shoulder.

This is what enabled the Deputy from Chartres to say, in his unpublished account of the trip, that this saintly creature, Madame Elizabeth, became amorous towards him, and yielded to her natural disposition, by laying her head on his shoulder.

About four in the afternoon they arrived at Meaux, and stopped in front of the Bishop's palace, where Bossuet, the author of the "Discourse on Universal History," once lived, and where he died eighty-seven years before.

The palace was occupied by a sworn Constitutional Bishop. Later we shall see in what sort of fashion he received the royal family.

The Queen was at once struck with the sombre aspect

of the building which they entered. Nowhere else could be found a palace, royal or religious, whose melancholy aspect would render it more worthy to hide the bitter misery which now sought an asylum for the night. It was not like Versailles, where the grandeur is magnificent. The grandeur of the palace at Meaux lay in its simplicity. A wide slope, paved with brick, led to the living-apartments, which opened into a garden, planted almost on the ramparts which form the foundation of the city. This garden was overshadowed by the church tower, entirely mantled with ivy. Thence, by an alley bordered with holly, you could reach the room which was once the study of the eloquent Bishop of Meaux, whence, from time to time, came those warning utterances which presaged the downfall of monarchies.

The Queen cast her eyes on this lugubrious building, and finding it harmonious with her mental condition, she looked about for some arm upon which she could lean, while visiting that part of the palace.

No one was near except Barnave. She smiled and said : " Give me your arm, Monsieur, and have the goodness to serve as my guide in this old palace. I dare not venture alone. I should be afraid of again hearing that grand voice, which once made Christendom tremble at the cry : *Madame is dying ! Madame is dead !* "

Barnave approached hastily, and offered his arm to the Queen, his pleasure mingled with respect ; but the Queen looked around, for Charny's absence disturbed her.

Barnave, who saw everything, noticed this look. " Does the Queen desire anything ? " he asked.

" Yes ! I wish to know where the King may be. "

" He is doing Monsieur Pétion the honor to receive him, and they are conversing, " replied Barnave.

The Queen appeared satisfied. Then, as if she needed

to snatch herself out of selfish thoughts, she said, "Come, Monsieur!" and led Barnave through the apartments of the old part of the palace, — almost fleeing, as if she were following a shadow, outlined by her imagination, and dared look neither before nor behind. In the bedroom of the great preacher she paused, almost out of breath. By chance she found herself in front of a woman's portrait. Raising her eyes mechanically she read on the frame the name, *Madame Henriette*, and trembled.

Barnave felt this tremor, without understanding it. "Is your Majesty in pain?" he asked.

"No! — but that portrait! — Madame Henriette!"

Barnave conjectured what was passing in the poor woman's mind, and said: "Yes, Madame Henriette, — Madame Henriette of England; not the widow of the unfortunate Charles the First, but their daughter, the wife of that careless Philippe d'Orleans, — not the Henriette who thought she should die of cold in the Louvre, but the Henriette who died of poison at Saint Cloud, and who sent her ring to Bossuet on her deathbed." After a moment's hesitation he added: "I should like it better if this were the portrait of the other."

"And why so?"

"Because there are some lips which alone dare give certain counsels, — above all, lips which are closed in death."

"Can you not tell me, Monsieur, what counsel would come to me from the lips of the widow of Charles the First?"

"If your Majesty so commands, I will try."

"Do so!" said the Queen.

"This is what those lips would say," said Barnave: "Oh my sister, do you not perceive the resemblance

between us? I came from France, as you came from Austria. To the English people I was a foreigner, as you are a stranger to the French. I might have given my erring husband good advice; but I either kept silence, or gave him bad counsel. In place of trying to unite him to his people, and his people to him, I incited him to war. I advised him to march against London with the Protestant Irish. Not only did I carry on a correspondence with England's enemies, but twice I went to France, in order to bring foreign troops into his kingdom. At last — ”

Barnave paused. “Go on!” said the Queen, her forehead frowning and her lips compressed.

“Why continue, Madame?” said the young orator, sorrowfully shaking his head. “You know well enough the end of that crimson history!”

“Yes! and I will go on, and tell you what Madame Henriette's portrait says to me, so that you can inform me if I am mistaken: ‘At last the Scotch betrayed and gave up their King. Charles the First was arrested as he was about crossing the channel to France. A tailor apprehended him. A butcher led him to prison. A wagoner purged the judicial chamber, which should have judged him. A beer-seller presided at the court of justice which tried him; and that nothing odious might be omitted from the trial, — and from the revision of that iniquitous judgment, carried before the presiding justice, who confirmed all such English decisions, — a masked executioner beheaded the royal victim.’ — That is what Madame Henriette's portrait would say to me! My God! I know all this as well as anybody. Yes, I know more, — that nothing is wanting in this fatal parallel. We have our beer-seller; only they call him Santerre, instead of Cromwell. We have our butcher; only, in-

stead of Harrison, they call him — what? — Legendre, I believe. We have our teamster; only, in place of calling him Pridge, they call him — Oh, as to him, well I don't know even his name, he is so small a creature, — nor you either, I'm sure; but ask him his name, and he'll tell you! I mean the fellow who directs our escort, — a peasant, a villain, a clodhopper! — Well, there you hear what Queen Henriette says to me!"

"And what is your answer?"

"I answer her thus: 'Poor dear Princess. This is not *advice* which you give me. This is the doom of history which you recall. Well, the history is done! Now I wait for counsel.'"

"Oh Madame, as to good counsel," said Barnave, "if you would not decline following it, not only the dead, but the living, would gladly furnish it."

"Dead or alive, let those who ought to speak, do so. Who dare say that the advice will not be followed, if it is good?"

"Ah Madame! The dead and the living can give you only the same advice!"

"Which is —?"

"To make yourself loved by the people!"

"And is it so easy to make one's self loved by *your* people?"

"Ah Madame, the people are more yours than mine; and the proof is, that when you first came to France the populace adored you."

"Oh Monsieur, you speak of a very fragile thing!"

"Madame, Madame!" said Barnave, "if I, an unknown man, emerging from my obscurity, have been able to achieve some popularity, how easy it will be for you to retain it, or to regain it! No," continued Barnave, growing more animated, "your cause, the cause of

the monarchy, — the most holy and noble of causes, — to whom have you confided it? What arms and what voices have defended it? Oh, what blindness to the signs of the times! What forgetfulness of the genius of France! Bear with me, who have desired the opportunity of being with you now, for this very purpose; — for at last I see you, at last I speak to you. How many times, my God! have I been at the point of speaking to you, to offer you my advice, my devotion, my — ”

“Silence!” said the Queen. “Somebody is coming! We will talk of this again, Monsieur Barnave. I shall be ready to receive you again, listen to you, and perhaps heed your counsels.”

“Oh Madame, Madame!” cried Barnave, in a transport of satisfaction.

“Silence!” repeated the Queen.

“Your Majesty is served, and the table is prepared,” said the servant, whose footsteps they had heard, as he appeared on the threshold.

They entered the dining-room. The King came from another room, where he had been talking with Pétion, while the Queen was talking with Barnave; and his Majesty appeared much excited.

The two bodyguards were in attendance, claiming the usual privilege of serving their Majesties. Charny stood a little farther off, in the embrasure of the window.

The King looked about him; and profiting by a moment when he was alone with his family, the two guards, and the Count, he said to these gentlemen: “After supper I must confer with you. If you please, you will then follow me to my rooms.” The three officers bowed.

Dinner began as usual; but although this time it was

served in the palace of one of the chief bishoprics of the kingdom, the tables were as poorly spread that evening at Meaux, as they had been well spread that morning at Château Thierry.

The King, who always had a good appetite, ate heartily, in spite of the poor fare. The Queen only ate two fresh eggs.

All day the Dauphin, who was somewhat ill, had been asking for strawberries; but the poor child was no longer with those who anticipated his least desires. The attendants whom he asked for strawberries all replied that there were none, or that none could be found; yet, along the road, he had seen the ragged peasant children eating whole handfuls of strawberries, which they had culled in the woods. He even envied these healthy children, with light hair and rosy cheeks, who had no need to ask for strawberries, but could pluck them for themselves, whenever they pleased, and knew in which glades the berries were to be gathered, as little birds know in what fields rapeseed and hempseed abound.

This desire, which she had not been able to gratify, troubled the Queen; so that when he refused what was set before him, and asked again for strawberries, the tears came into the eyes of this powerless mother.

Looking about for some one to whom she could speak about it, she saw Charny, silent, upright, and motionless. She beckoned to him once,—twice; but, absorbed in thought, he did not notice her signs.

At last, in tones hoarse with emotion, she called him by his full name and title.

Charny started, as if emerging from a dream, and made a movement to go towards the Queen.

At that moment the door opened, and Barnave appeared with a plate of strawberries in his hand.

"The Queen will excuse me," he said, "for entering in this way, and the King will be so good as to pardon me, I hope ; but several times during the day I have heard the Dauphin ask for strawberries, and finding this plateful on the Bishop's table, I have taken it for him."

Meanwhile Charny made the circuit of the table and was approaching the Queen ; but she did not give him time to come very near.

"Thanks, Count," she said, "but Monsieur Barnave has anticipated my wishes, and I need nothing more."

Charny bowed and returned to his place, without a word.

"Thank you, my dear Barnave," said the young Dauphin.

"Monsieur Barnave," said the King, "our dinner is not very good ; but if you will share it with us, you will give pleasure to both the Queen and myself."

"Sire," said Barnave, "an invitation from the King is a command. Where does it please your Majesty I should sit?"

"Between the Queen and the Dauphin," said the King.

Barnave took his seat, beside himself with pride and passion.

Charny looked upon this scene without a shiver of jealousy running through his heart and veins ; only, as he saw this poor butterfly burning his wings at the royal flame, he said to himself : "Another man lost ! Too bad, for he is worth more than the others." Then relapsing into his constant meditation he thought : "That letter, that letter ! What can there be in that letter ?"

CHAPTER IX.

CALVARY.

AFTER supper the three officers, who had been requested to do so, went up to the King's chamber.

Madame Royale, the Dauphin, and Madame de Tourzel were in their own rooms. The Queen, the King, and Madame Elizabeth were in attendance.

As soon as the young gentlemen entered, the King said : " Monsieur de Charny, do me the favor of fastening the door, so that nobody can come in and disturb us. — I have something of the highest importance to communicate. Yesterday, gentlemen, at Dormans, Monsieur Pétion proposed to me that you should escape in disguise. To this the Queen and myself were both opposed, for fear the proposition was a snare, and they only wished to tempt you away from us, in order to assassinate you, or else give you up to some provincial military commission, which would condemn you to be shot, without the possibility of appeal. We therefore, the Queen and I, took it upon ourselves to reject this proposition ; but to-day Monsieur Pétion returns to the charge, pledging his honor as a Deputy in its support ; so I think it right to make you acquainted with what he fears and what he proposes."

"Sire," interrupted Charny, "before your Majesty goes any farther, — and I speak not only in my own name, for I feel sure that I interpret the sentiments of my brother officers also, — before going any farther, will the King promise us one favor?"

"Gentlemen, your devotion to the Queen and myself has endangered your lives during the last three days. For these three days you have been repeatedly threatened with the most cruel deaths. You have shared the shame into which we are plunged, the insults which cover us. Gentlemen, you have not only the right to ask a favor, but you have only to make known your wishes, to ensure their immediate fulfilment, if not beyond the power of the Queen and myself."

"Well, Sire," said Charny, "we humbly but urgently ask your Majesty, whatever may be the propositions made by the Deputies on our behalf, to leave us at liberty to accept or refuse these propositions."

"Gentlemen," said the King, "I give you my word to exert no pressure over your wills in this matter. Whatever *you* desire, shall be done."

"Then we will gratefully listen to you, Sire," replied Charny.

The Queen looked at him in astonishment. She remarked in him a growing indifference, which she could not reconcile with his obstinate decision not to withdraw an instant from what he considered his duty. However, she said nothing, but let the King continue the conversation.

"With this liberty of choice left entirely to yourselves, here is Pétion's proposal, in almost his own words. From the moment of our arrival in Paris, he says, there will be no security for the three officers accompanying me; for neither himself, Barnave, nor Latour Maubourg can agree to save them from deadly peril, and their blood will depend upon the caprice of the people."

Charny looked at his two companions. A smile of contempt was on their lips. "Well, Sire, and what then?" he asked.

"This is what Pétion proposes. He proposes to procure for you three uniforms as National Guardsmen, to have the doors of this palace left open to-night, and so give each of you liberty to escape."

Charny again consulted his companions, but the same smile was his answer.

"Sire," he said, again addressing the King, "our days have been consecrated to your Majesties; and as you have deigned to accept our homage, it will be easier for us to die for you than to be separated from you. Do us the favor to treat us to-morrow as you did yesterday. But of all your Court, of all your army, of all your guards, there remain to you three faithful hearts. Do not take from them the sole glory to which they aspire, — faithfulness to the end."

"Very well, gentlemen, we accept," said the Queen; "only, you will understand that henceforth all must be in common between us. You are no longer our servants; you are our friends, brothers. I do not ask you to give me your names, for I know them; but," and as she spoke she drew her tablets from her pocket, "give the names of your mothers, brothers, and sisters. We may be so unhappy as to lose you, without being ourselves ruined. Then it will be my task to apprise these loved ones of our mutual grief, and at the same time aid them in bearing their sorrows, by any means in my power. Go on, Monsieur de Malden, go on, Monsieur de Valory! Speak boldly! In case of *death*, — and we are all so close to the reality that we ought not to recoil at the word, — who are your relatives, who are the friends you would specially commend to our devout remembrance and lasting gratitude?"

Malden mentioned his mother, an infirm old lady, living on a small estate in the neighborhood of Blois.

Valory mentioned his sister, a young orphan, at school in a convent at Soissons.

Certainly, no hearts could be stronger or more full of courage than those of these two young men ; yet as the Queen wrote down the addresses of Madame de Malden and Mademoiselle de Valory, both the bodyguards made ineffectual efforts to restrain their tears. Even the Queen was forced to suspend her writing, in order to take out her handkerchief and dry her eyes ; for she was easily moved by the thought of death.

When she had finished noting these addresses, she turned towards Charny. "Alas, Monsieur, I know that you have no near relatives to commend to our care. Your father and mother are both dead, and also your two brothers —" but here the Queen's voice failed.

Charny took up her word : "My two brothers had the happiness of suffering death for your Majesty, — yes, Madame ; but the last brother left a poor babe, whom he commended to my care, in a sort of will which I found among his papers. He led a young girl astray from her family, from whom she can hardly expect pardon. So long as I live, neither she nor their babe shall want for anything needful ; but as your Majesty has said, with most admirable courage, we are all face to face with death, and if I am struck down, the poor girl and her babe will be without resources. Madame, deign to inscribe on your tablets the name of a poor peasant-girl ; and if, like my two brothers, I have the happiness to die for my august master and mistress, lower your generous eyes to the estate of Catherine Billot and her child, both of whom are to be found in the little village of Ville d'Avray."

Doubtless the picture of Charny, dying as his two brothers had died, was too much for Marie Antoinette's

imagination ; for she turned with a feeble cry, dropped her tablets, and tottered to an armchair.

The two bodyguards hurried towards her, while Charny picked up the royal tablets, wrote therein the name of Catherine Billot, and placed them on the chimneypiece.

The Queen made an effort and recovered herself. Then the young gentlemen, understanding that she ought to be alone, after such an outburst of emotion, ceremoniously withdrew, one after the other ; but she extended her hand, saying : “Gentlemen, I hope you will not go away without kissing my hand.”

The two bodyguards advanced in the same order as before, — Malden first, and then Valory.

Last came Charny. The Queen was tremulous, awaiting his kiss, for whose sake alone she had offered her hand to the other two officers ; but hardly did the Count’s lips touch that beautiful hand, for it seemed to him — with that letter of Andrée’s on his heart — that he should be guilty of sacrilege in pressing the Queen’s hand with his lips.

Marie Antoinette heaved a sigh which resembled a groan. Never had she realized, as in that abortive kiss, how the abyss between herself and her lover had been growing wider and wider day by day.

The next day, at the moment of departure, Latour Maubourg and Barnave — doubtless ignorant of what had taken place the evening before between the King and the three officers — renewed their proposal for the young men to dress themselves as National Guardsmen ; but they refused, declaring that their places were on the seat of the royal coach, and that they should wear no other costume than that commanded by the King.

Then Barnave had boards fastened on each side of the upper seat, in order that two grenadiers might occupy

these extra places, and protect, as far as possible, the King's obstinate servitors.

At ten o'clock they left Meaux. They were to re-enter Paris, from which they had been five days absent. Five days! What a bottomless pit had been dug during these five days!

Hardly had they driven a league from Meaux, before their cortege took on a more terrible aspect than ever.

The populace from the environs of the capital flowed into the ranks. Barnave wished the postilions to drive at a fast trot; but the Claye National Guards barred the road with their bayonets. To attempt a break through this dike would be indeed imprudent. The Queen saw the danger and begged the Deputies to do nothing to augment the anger of the rabble, for they could scent the coming wrath, and hear the mutterings of a formidable storm.

Soon the crowd was so great that the horses could hardly move at all. Never had the weather been so hot. It was no longer air they breathed, but fire.

The insolent curiosity of the people followed the King and Queen into the farthest corners of their coach, where they tried to find a refuge.

Men mounted the steps and pushed their heads inside the carriage. Some hoisted themselves upon the outside, while others straddled the horses.

It was a miracle that Charny and his two companions were not killed twenty times. The two grenadiers were not strong enough to parry every blow. They besought and even supplicated the rabble to desist, and even commanded submission in the name of the National Assembly; but their voices were lost amidst the tumult of shouts and vociferations.

An advance guard of more than two thousand men

preceded the coach, while there was a rear guard of over four thousand.

As they drew nearer and nearer to Paris, it seemed as if the very air failed them, absorbed by the giant city.

The carriage moved on beneath the sun thirty-five degrees high, and amidst a cloud of dust, of which each atom was like a speck of pounded glass.

Twice or thrice the Queen sank back, declaring that she was suffocating. At Bourget the King became so pale that they feared he was ill. He asked for a glass of wine, for his heart began to fail him. To complete a sacred parallel, it was only necessary that some one should offer him, as was offered Jesus, a sponge soaked with gall and vinegar; and indeed the suggestion was made, but it was happily repelled.

At last they reached Villette. It took an hour for the crowd to spindle out sufficiently for them to go between the two rows of stone houses, whose whiteness so reflected the sun's rays as to double the heat.

Everywhere were men, women, and children. The eye could hardly measure such a crowd. The pavement was so thickly covered, that those who occupied it could not stir. The doors, windows, and roofs of the houses were filled with spectators. The trees bent beneath their weight of living fruit. All the people wore their hats; partly because this notice had been placarded all over Paris the previous evening:

WHOEVER SALUTES THE KING SHALL BE FLOGGED.

WHOEVER INSULTS HIM SHALL BE HANGED.

All this was so terrifying that the commissioners dared not pass through the Rue du Faubourg Saint Martin,

which was full of encumbrances, and consequently of dangers, — a mournful street, a bloody street, a street celebrated for its records of assassination, as witness the terrible history of Berthier.

It was decided to enter the city by way of the Champs Élysées, thus compelling the procession to make the circuit of Paris by way of the outside boulevards.

This entailed three hours more of distress ; and this distress was so insupportable that the Queen begged they might take the shorter cut, even though it were more perilous.

Twice she tried to lower the blinds ; but twice the muttering of the crowd compelled her to raise them again.

At the barrier a large company of grenadiers surrounded the carriage. Several marched near the windows, almost obstructing those openings with their great fur hats.

At last, about six o'clock, an advance guard appeared at the end of the Monceau Gardens, dragging along three pieces of artillery, which rebounded with heavy jerks along the uneven pavement. This advance guard was composed of cavalry and infantry, but so mixed in among the people, that the soldiers found it almost impossible not to break their ranks. Those who perceived them hurried along towards the heights of the Champs Élysées.

This was the third time Louis the Sixteenth entered Paris by this fatal gateway. He came in that way the first time, after the fall of the Bastille ; the second time, on that awful Sixth of October ; the third time, — the present, — after the flight to Varennes.

All Paris, on learning that the procession was coming by the Neuilly Road, hurried to the Champs Élysées ;

so when the royal family reached the barrier, they could see, stretching far away from the gate, a vast sea of humanity, silent, gloomy, menacing, and as unrespecting as the sea, which would not ebb at the command of a crowned Canute.

More lugubrious than all else, if not more frightful, was a double hedge of National Guardsmen, extending away to the gateway of the Tuileries, and carrying their muskets reversed, as a sign of mourning.

It was indeed a day of mourning, of great mourning, — mourning for a dynasty of seven centuries. The coach, which rolled along slowly amidst all these people, was a funeral chariot, conveying royalty to its tomb.

On perceiving these long rows of National Guards, the soldiers who accompanied the coach waved their weapons, and shouted: “Hurrah for the Nation!” and this cry echoed all along the line, from the barrier to the Tuileries.

Then the immense human wave, lost under the trees, — spreading out as far as the streets of the Faubourg du Roule on one side, and as far as the banks of the Seine on the other, — undulated with the cry, “Long live the Nation!”

From all France went up this shout of fraternity. Only one family, the family which wished to escape from France, was excluded from that fraternity.

It took an hour to go from the barrier to Place Louis XV. The horses bent beneath their loads, for each carried a stalwart grenadier.

Behind the coach, which still contained the King, Queen, Dauphin, Madame Royale, Madame Elizabeth, Madame de Tourzel, Pétion, and Barnave, came the cabriolet containing the Queen’s two female attendants and Latour Maubourg. Behind this cabriolet was to be seen an open

carriage,—shaded, however, with green boughs,—occupied by Drouet, who had arrested the King, and by Guillaume and Maugin, who had aided by main force in this arrest. Fatigue had driven them to adopt this method of locomotion.

Billot alone, as if the zeal of his vengeance were of bronze, remained on horseback, and seemed to dominate the whole occasion.

As they entered Place Louis XV. (now called Place de la Concorde), the King noticed that somebody had bandaged the eyes of his grandfather's statue. "What is that intended to express?" Louis asked of Barnave.

"I'm sure I don't know, Sire," responded the man to whom the question was addressed.

"I know," said Pétion. "It refers to the blindness of the monarchy."

During the journey—despite the escort, despite the commissioners, despite the placards which forbade any insult to the King, under pain of hanging—the rabble two or three times broke through the line of grenadiers, a feeble and powerless dike against an element to which God had forgotten to say, as to the sea, "Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther."

When this occurred, when the ranks of the grenadiers were broken through, the Queen suddenly saw two men appear at the carriage windows, with hideous and pitiless faces,—such men as only appear occasionally on the surface of society, as certain monsters only rise to the surface of the ocean in the midst of storms.

At first she was so affrighted by this apparition, that she again hastily closed one of the carriage windows.

"Why do you lower the glass?" cried ten furious voices.

"Look at my poor children," said the Queen, "and see what a state they are in!" and she wiped the sweat from their wet cheeks. "We are suffocating!" she added.

"Bah!" replied a voice. "That's nothing! Make yourself easy! We'll suffocate you in another fashion!" and a blow of the fist broke the glass into shivers.

Amidst this awful spectacle were a few episodes which must have consoled the royal pair, if they were accessible to expressions of good-will as readily as to its opposite.

Despite the placard which forbade any expression of respect to the King, Monsieur Guilhermy, a member of the Assembly, uncovered his head as the King passed by; and when they wished to force him to put on his hat, he threw it far away and exclaimed: "Who dares bring that back to me?"

At the entrance of the swinging bridge, leading to the palace gardens, they found Twenty Deputies who had been delegated to protect the royal prisoners.

Then came Lafayette and his staff. Lafayette approached the coach.

"Oh Monsieur," cried the Queen, as soon as she saw him, "save our bodyguards!"

This was not a needless request, for danger was at hand, and great danger, too.

Meantime a scene took place at the gates of the palace, which was not without its poetic side.

Five or six women, among the Queen's personal attendants, who had left the Tuileries after the royal flight, — believing the Queen had gone away forever, — now wished to re-enter the palace, in order to receive her properly.

"Be off!" cried the sentinels, presenting the points of their bayonets.

"Slaves of that Austrian woman," shouted the fishwives, shaking their fists.

Beset by the bayonets of the guards, and braving the threats of the Dames from the Market-place, a sister of Madame Campan stepped forward and said: "Listen! Since the Queen was fifteen years old I have been in her personal service. She endowed me, and gave me my wedding outfit. I served her when she was powerful. Ought I to abandon her now, when she is miserable?"

"She's right," was the outcry. "Soldiers, let 'em pass!" and at that order, from rulers not to be gainsaid, the military ranks opened, and the women went into the palace; and soon after, the Queen could see them wave their handkerchiefs from the windows on the main floor.

Meanwhile the coach moved slowly on, driving before it a tide of people and a cloud of dust, as a ship pushes its way through the ocean waves and a cloud of foam; and the comparison is the more exact, because never were the victims of shipwreck threatened by a sea more agitated and turbulent than that which was preparing itself to swallow up this unhappy family when they reached the Tuileries, which they regarded as their haven of safety.

At last the carriage stopped. They had reached the steps of the Great Terrace.

"Oh gentlemen," again said the Queen, but this time addressing herself to Pétion and Barnave, "the bodyguards, the bodyguards!"

"You have no one in particular among these gentlemen, whom you would commend to our protection?" asked Barnave.

The Queen looked at him sharply, with surprised eyes, and said, "No one!" Then she insisted that the King and the children should get out of the carriage first.

The next ten minutes which rolled away were the most cruel of her life, — not excepting those when she was led to the scaffold.

She felt convinced, not that she should be assassinated, — death would be nothing, — but that she would be given to the mob for a plaything, or shut up in some prison, whence she could emerge only by the doorway of personal infamy and dishonor.

As she put her foot on the carriage steps, protected by the arch above her head, formed — by Barnave's order — of the muskets and bayonets of the National Guards, a flash of faintness through her brain made her believe she should fall to the ground; but as her eyes were about closing, in a last agonizing look, she saw, or thought she saw, in front of her, that terrible man, who at Château de Taverny had so mysteriously raised for her the veil of the future; the man whom she had seen only once since that time, — on her return from Versailles, on that dreadful Sixth of October; that man, who only appeared when he predicted some great catastrophe, or at the hour when those great catastrophes were being fulfilled.

When she was sure her eyes did not deceive her, she closed them and uttered a cry. She could be strong in fighting against realities, but she fell powerless and inert before this sinister vision.

It seemed as if the earth fled from beneath her feet, that the crowd, the trees, the burning sky, the motionless palace, — all were in a whirlpool about her. Vigorous arms seized her, and she felt herself borne along amidst clamors and shouts. At that instant she thought she heard the voice of the bodyguards, trying to call upon

themselves the anger of the populace, and thus turn it from the intended victim. She reopened her eyes an instant, and saw those unfortunate men torn from their seats on the coach. Pale and handsome as ever, Charny was fighting against ten men, — the martyr-light in his eyes, a disdainful smile on his lips. From Charny her glance turned upon a man who seemed to rise up in the midst of this cyclone, and with increased terror she now distinctly recognized the mysterious personage whom she had seen at Taverney and Sèvres Bridge.

“You? you?” she cried, trying to repulse him with her rigid hands.

“Yes, I!” he whispered in her ear. “I have need of thee, to push the monarchy into its last abyss, and therefore I save thee.”

This time it was more than she could bear. She uttered a shriek and fell in a dead swoon.

Meantime the rabble were trying to cut Charny, Malden, and Valory into pieces, while they carried Drouet and Billot in triumph on their shoulders.

CHAPTER X.

THE CHALICE.

WHEN the Queen came to herself she saw that she was in her old bedroom in the Tuileries. Her two favorite waiting-women were at her side, — Madame de Misery and Madame Campan.

Her first inquiry was for the Dauphin. He was in his chamber, lying in his own bed, cared for by Madame de Tourzel, his governess, and by Madame Brunier, his chambermaid.

This assurance was not enough for the Queen. She arose at once, and ran into her son's apartment, though she was all in disorder.

The child had been wofully frightened, and had cried pitifully; but they had calmed his agony, and he was now asleep, although slight shudders disturbed his rest.

For a long time she leaned on a post of his bed, and looked at him fixedly through her tears.

The terrible words uttered by that fearful man seemed incessantly to reverberate in her ear: "I have need of thee, to push the monarchy into its last abyss, and therefore I save thee!" Was this true? Was it she who was urging the monarchy on to its destruction? It must be so, since her enemies, who kept vigilant watch over the monarchy, had confided to her this destructive task, because she could accomplish it better than themselves.

This abyss, towards which she was pushing the monarchy, would it close up again, after devouring the King,

herself, and the throne? Must her two children be thrown into the gulf? In the religions of antiquity did childlike innocence disarm the vengeance of the gods? It is true that Jehovah refused Abraham's sacrifice of his son Isaac; but he afterward accepted the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter.

These were gloomy meditations for a queen, — more gloomy for a mother.

At last she shook her head sadly, and returned, with slow steps, to her own room. There she noted the disorder in which she found herself. Her clothing was tumbled, and it was torn in many places. Her shoes had been pierced by the sharp stones of the rugged pavement over which she had been dragged. She was covered with dust. She asked for some other shoes and a bath.

Barnave had twice called to inquire after her welfare. Madame Campan looked at the Queen with surprise, as she announced this visit.

"You will thank him affectionately, Madame," said Marie Antoinette. Madame Campan was more and more amazed.

"We are under great obligations to that young man, Madame," added the Queen, condescending, though this was not her custom, to give her reasons.

"But I have thought, Madame," the attendant ventured to say, "that Monsieur Barnave was a demagogue, a man of the people, to whom any means seem good, if they only help him to gain his point."

"Any means offered by his talent? Yes, Madame, that is true. But now remember well what I tell you. A sentiment of pride, which I cannot blame, has made him approve everything which smooths the way to honor and glory for the class wherein he was born. There is no pardon for the nobility who cast themselves

into the Revolution ; but if power returns to us, the pardon of Barnave is accorded beforehand. — Go, now, and try to find out something about Monsieur de Malden and Monsieur de Valory.”

The Queen’s heart added Charny’s name to these two, but her lips refused to pronounce it.

Some one came to say that the Queen’s bath was ready. During the brief interval which had elapsed since her visit to the Dauphin, sentinels had been stationed everywhere, even at the door of her toilet closet and bathroom. With difficulty she persuaded them to let the door be fastened while she bathed.

Here is what Prudhomme says about it, in his record of Revolutions in Paris :

Some good Patriots, in whom the sentiment of compassion is not so dead as that of royalty, have been anxious about the mental and physical condition of Louis Sixteenth and his family, after a journey so disastrous as that from Sainte Menehould.

They may be reassured. The above-mentioned gentleman, on his return to his apartments Saturday evening, did not find himself more uncomfortable than after a fatiguing chase, — and perhaps less so. He ate his chicken as usual. The next day, after dinner, he played with his son.

As to the mother, she took a bath when she arrived. Her first orders were for some boots, taking care to show how those which she had worn during the journey were frayed into holes. Towards the officers stationed as her particular guardians, she conducted herself somewhat testily, and thought it ridiculous and indecent that they should leave open the doors of her bathroom and bedroom.

See how this Monster of Infamy ate a pullet as soon as he reached home, and played with his little son the very next day ! Behold this Sybarite, who absolutely

took a bath after five days' journey in a carriage, and three nights in public houses. Behold this Prodigal, who asked for a change of shoes, because hers were worn into holes by her journey. Look upon this Messalina, who, thinking it indecent and ridiculous that she should be compelled to leave open the doors of her bathroom and bedroom, asked her guards for permission to close those doors.

Ah Monsieur Journalist, you appear very much like a man who eats chicken only on the four feastsdays of the year, who has no children, who never takes a bath, and goes to his seat in the National Assembly with his shoes full of holes.

Risking all the scandal such a deed might occasion, the Queen took her bath, and obtained permission to shut her door; but the sentinel did not miss the opportunity of taunting Madame Campan as an Aristocrat, when she returned with such information as she had been able to gather, and entered the bathroom.

This news was not so painful as had been feared.

After they passed the barrier, on their way through the Champs Élysées, Charny and his two companions formed a plan. This plan was to draw upon themselves a portion of the dangers to which the royal family were exposed. To do this it was agreed that as soon as the coach came to a full stop, one officer should spring off towards the left and another towards the right, while he who sat in the middle should scramble towards the front. In this way the troop of assassins would divide, being forced to go in opposite directions, — following three different scents, after as many different quarries; and perhaps the way might thus be left clear for the King and Queen to enter the palace.

As has already been stated, the coach halted at the

first pond, near the Grand Terrace of the palace. The would-be murderers were in such haste that they rushed in front of the horses, and two were badly hurt. For an instant the two grenadiers, still on the box, were able to protect the three officers; but the grenadiers were soon pulled to the ground, and this left the three officers defenceless.

This was their chosen opportunity. All three sprang rapidly away, but not so rapidly, nevertheless, as not to be able to capsize five or six men who were mounted on the wheels and steps, for the very purpose of tearing the brave officers down. Thus, as had been anticipated, the wrath of the people was scattered in three directions.

Hardly had Malden touched the ground, when he found himself under the axes of two sappers. Both axes were lifted, and only waiting for a chance to strike him, without injuring anybody else. By a violent and rapid movement he was able to push away some men who were holding him by the collar, so that for a second he stood alone.

Then he crossed his arms and said, "Strike!" One of the two axes remained uplifted. The victim's courage paralyzed the assassin. The other axe fell, thirsting for Malden's blood; but as it fell it encountered a musket-barrel, which turned it aside, so that only the edge grazed Malden's throat, giving him but a slight wound.

Then he lowered his head and ran towards the bystanders, who drew back to let him pass; and a few steps farther on he was received by a group of officers who, in order to save him, shoved him the other side of the row of National Guards, who were forming, for the royal prisoners, a covered pathway from the coach to the palace. At that moment General Lafayette perceived Malden.

Urging his horse towards him, the General seized him by the collar, and pulled him against his stirrups, so as to shield Malden, in some degree, by the General's popularity ; but Malden, recognizing him, cried out : " Let me alone, Monsieur ! Attend to the royal family, and leave me to these cutthroats." In fact Lafayette did release him ; for seeing a man who was trying to carry off the Queen, he rushed to that man's side.

Malden was knocked down by some, and helped up by others. Some attacked him, while others defended him. Covered with bruises and bleeding wounds, he at last reached the gateway of the palace. There an officer, seeing that he was almost overcome, seized him by the collar, jerked him along, and exclaimed : " It's too bad to have such a wretch die in this easy way. Some special punishment should be invented for scoundrels of this sort. Leave him to me. I'll see to him !"

So he continued to insult Monsieur de Malden, saying, " Come along, you jack ! Come here ! You'll settle this affair with *me* !" till at last he drew him into a dark corner, when he said : " Save yourself, Monsieur, and forgive the ruse which enabled me to get you out of the hands of those wretches." Then Malden ran up the steps of the palace, and disappeared.

Somewhat similar were Valory's experiences. He received severe wounds in the head ; but at the moment when a score of bayonets, a score of sabres, and a score of daggers were raised to put an end to his defenceless existence, Pétion threw himself forward, and repulsed the assassins with all the vigor he possessed.

" In the name of the National Assembly," he cried, " I declare you unworthy the name of Frenchmen, if you do not instantly get out of the way, and let this man alone. I am Pétion !"

Under a somewhat rude exterior Pétion concealed great honesty and a loyal and courageous heart. Thus speaking, he seemed so noble in the eyes of these assassins that they went away, and left Valory in his hands.

Then Pétion helped him, supported him, — for, exhausted with the blows he had received, Valory was hardly able to stand upright, — conducted him as far as the line of National Guards, and confided him to the hands of Pétion's aide, Mathieu Dumas, who promised to answer for Valory with his head, and protected him till they were safe in the palace.

Just then Pétion heard Barnave's voice, calling for help, as he found himself unable to defend Charny single-handed.

The Count was seized by a score of arms, and dragged along in the dirt ; but he recovered his feet, wrenched a bayonet from a gun, and ploughed his way through the crowd about him ; yet he would have been soon overcome in this unequal struggle, if first Barnave and then Pétion had not come to his relief.

The Queen listened to this report while in her bath. Campan, who brought a portion of these facts, could give positive information only about Malden and Valory, who had been seen in the palace, battered and blood-stained, but, on the whole, without serious wounds.

As to Charny, nothing certain was known about him, except that he had been saved by Barnave and Pétion, for he had not been seen to enter the palace.

When Madame Campan reported this last fact, such a mortal pallor overspread the Queen's face that her attendant, believing that this change was owing to fear lest some great misfortune had happened to the Count, exclaimed : " Her Majesty need not despair of

Charny's safety because he has not been seen in the palace. The Queen is aware that Madame de Charny lives in Paris, and perhaps the Count has found a place of security with his wife."

This was the very idea which had occurred to Marie Antoinette, and made her turn so frightfully pale. She came out of her bath, crying: "Dress me, Campan, dress me quick. It is absolutely necessary that I should know what has become of the Count."

"Which Count?" asked Madame de Misery, who just then entered the room.

"Charny!" said the Queen.

"He is in her Majesty's antechamber, and solicits the honor of a brief interview."

"Ah!" murmured the Queen. "Then he has kept his word!"

The two ladies looked at their mistress, not knowing what the Queen meant to say. Trembling, and incapable of pronouncing a word, she made a sign for them to hurry.

Never was toilet more rapid. Marie Antoinette contented herself with having her hair simply twisted into a knot, after her head had been washed in perfumed water, to cleanse it from the dust. She slipped a loose muslin robe over her chemise, returned to her reception-room, and, white as the gown she wore, ordered Charny's admission.

CHAPTER XI.

THE THRUST OF THE LANCE.

A FEW seconds thereafter the chamberlain announced Monsieur de Charny, who stood framed in the doorway, and lightened by the golden reflection of a ray of the setting sun.

Like the Queen, he had employed the time since his return to the palace in effacing the traces of his long journey, and of the terrible combat he had encountered on his arrival.

He had put on his old uniform, — that is, his costume as captain of a frigate, with red lapels and lace ruffles.

This was the very style of costume he had worn on a certain day when he met the Queen and Andrée de Taverny on the Place du Palais-Royal, whence he afterwards conducted them to a cab, and attended them home to Versailles.

Never had he appeared so elegant, so calm, so handsome; and the Queen could hardly believe, as she looked upon him, that this was the same man who had been in imminent peril of being torn into pieces by the rabble, an hour before.

“Oh Monsieur,” she cried, “they must have told you how anxious I was on your account, and that I sent out for intelligence of you.”

“Yes, Madame,” said Charny, bowing; “and, believe me, I did not go to my own apartments till after I was assured, through your ladies, that you were safe and well.”

"They say you owe your life to Pétion and Barnave. Is this true? and am I therefore under a new obligation to Barnave?"

"It is true, Madame; and I owe double thanks to Monsieur Barnave, for being in no haste to leave me. Even after I was safe in my chamber, he was so kind as to tell me, in the course of our conversation, that you spoke of my welfare during our homeward journey."

"Of your welfare, Count? and in what way?"

"In telling the King of the anxiety you felt sure your old friend Andrée must feel on account of my absence. — I am far from agreeing with you, Madame, as to the liveliness of her anxiety. However —" Here he paused, for the Queen, already so pale, grew livid.

"However —?" repeated the Queen.

"However, without accepting, in all its generosity, the leave of absence which your Majesty proposed offering me, yet now that I am assured of the safety of the King, of yourself, and of your august children, it would be agreeable to me if I could in person report my condition to the Countess."

The Queen pressed her left hand over her heart, as if she wished to assure herself that she was not deathstruck by the blow thus received, and in a voice choking and parched she said: "That is indeed but fair, Monsieur; only I ask myself why you have waited so long before discharging this duty."

"The Queen forgets that I pledged my word not to see the Countess again without the royal permission."

"And you come here to ask for that permission?"

"Yes, Madame! and I beg your Majesty to grant it."

"With which permission, in your present ardor to once more see Madame de Charny, you might possibly dispense! Is it not so?"

"I consider the Queen unjust at my expense," replied Charny. "When I left Paris I supposed I was leaving it for a long time, if not forever. It was not my fault, as your Majesty will remember, that I did not lay down my life at Varennes, like my brother, or have my body torn asunder along the road, or in the Tuileries Gardens, like Monsieur de Dampierre. During the journey I did all that lay in my power to make our scheme a success. If it had been my good fortune to conduct your Majesty beyond the frontier, or to have the honor of dying, I should have died or become an exile, and never have seen the Countess again; but, I repeat to your Majesty, on my return to Paris, if I am not permitted to give any information about myself to the lady who bears my name, — and you know how she chances to bear it, Madame! — it will be indeed a mark of indifference; especially, as my brother Isidore is no longer here to take my place. If I am not mistaken, this was your Majesty's idea two days ago."

The Queen allowed her arm to glide slowly along the back of her lounge, and then followed this movement with an inclination of her shapely form, which brought her a little nearer to Charny, while she pathetically said: "You must love that woman very much, Monsieur, to so coolly cause me a similar heartache."

"Madame, it is hardly six years ago since you yourself, at a time when I fancied there existed for me only one woman on earth, — and she the one woman God had placed so high above me that I could not attain her level, — it is but six years since you imposed me upon Mademoiselle Andrée de Taverney as her husband, and gave her to me as a wife. During these six years my hand has but twice touched hers. Except when absolutely necessary, I have not addressed ten words to her, and

our eyes have not met ten times. On my part, my life has been both occupied and filled,—filled with another passion, occupied with a thousand cares, a thousand tasks, a thousand contests, which make up a man's career. I have lived at Court. I have travelled great distances. With the clew confided to me by the King, I have been engaged in this gigantic intrigue,—tangled to me,—which fatality has now unravelled. I have counted neither the days, the months, nor the years. Time has passed all the more rapidly, because I have been so occupied with these passions, these cares, these intrigues, of which I speak. Not so has it been with Madame de Charney. Since she had the misfortune of leaving you,—undoubtedly because she had displeased you,—she has lived alone, in her pavilion in Rue Coq Héron. This solitude, this isolation, this abandonment, she has endured without complaint, for her heart, being exempt from love's passion, has not felt the need of the same affection that other women feel; but she might not perhaps accept without complaint my neglect of the simplest attentions, the commonest courtesies."

"My God, Monsieur, you are certainly much concerned with what the Countess does or does not think of you,—whether she sees you or not! Before taking all this trouble, it might be well to ascertain if she thought of you when you went away, or thinks of you now, on your return."

"Whether or not she thinks of me on my return, I do not know; but I am sure my Countess did think of me when I went away."

"Then you saw her before you went away?"

"Already I have had the honor of telling your Majesty that I have given the Queen my word not to see my wife!"

"Then she wrote you?"

Charny was silent; but Marie Antoinette exclaimed: "Come, Monsieur, she *did* write you! Why not acknowledge it?"

"She entrusted my brother Isidore with a letter for me."

"And you have read that letter? What did she say to you? What could she write? Yet she swore to me — Speak! Answer at once! In that letter she said to you —? Speak out! Can't you see I'm boiling over!"

"I cannot repeat to your Majesty what the Countess said in her letter. I have n't read it!"

"You tore it up?" said the joyous Queen. "You threw it into the fire without reading it? Charny, Charny, if you did that, you are the most faithful of men; and I am wrong to complain, for I have lost nothing."

She extended both arms to draw him to herself; but Charny remained where he was, and said: "I did not tear it or burn it!"

"Then why didn't you read it?" asked the Queen, sinking into her chair.

"The letter was not to be given me by my brother, unless I was mortally wounded. Alas! It was not I who was marked for death, but he. When he was dead, some one brought me his papers. Among them was this letter from the Countess, with this memorandum attached to it. — Here, Madame —!"

As he spoke Charny handed the Queen the note written by Isidore's hand, and which he had affixed to the Countess's letter. Marie Antoinette received it with trembling fingers, and struck her bell.

During the interview we are recording, night had come on; so she exclaimed: "Lights, instantly!"

The chamberlain went out, and a moment of stillness ensued, during which no other sound was to be heard save the Queen's irregular breathing and the tumultuous pulsation of her heart.

The chamberlain returned with two girandoles, which he placed on the mantel. The Queen barely allowed him time to retire; and as soon as he had withdrawn, and closed the door, she approached the mantel with the note in her hand.

Twice she looked at the paper without seeing anything. "Oh," she muttered, "it is n't paper! It's flame!"

Passing her hand over her eyes, as if to restore the faculty of sight, which she seemed to have lost, she tapped her foot impatiently and exclaimed: "My God! My God!"

At last, by sheer force of will, her hand ceased trembling, and she regained her clearness of sight. In hoarse tones, wholly unlike her usual voice, she began the note:

This letter is not addressed to me, but to my brother, Count Olivier. It is written by his wife, the Countess.

The Queen here paused a few seconds, and then resumed:

If anything happens to me, whoever finds this paper is requested to send it to my brother Olivier, or else return it to the Countess.

Again the reader paused and shook her head, and then went on reading:

I received it from her with the following instructions.

"Ah, let us see the instructions," muttered the Queen, as again she rubbed her hand over her eyes.

If in the enterprise in which we are engaged the Count is successful, and no mishap befalls him, this letter is to be returned to the Countess.

The Queen's voice became more and more tremulous as she read; but she persevered.

If he is grievously wounded, but not unto death, he is to grant his wife the favor of letting her come to him.

"Oh, all is too plain!" stammered the Queen; and then she continued, in an unintelligible voice:

Finally, if he is wounded unto death, this letter is to be given him; and if he cannot read it himself, it is to be read to him, in order that he may know, before he dies, the secret it contains.

"Well, do you still deny it?" asked Marie Antoinette, covering the Count with her flaming gaze.

"Deny what?"

"Deny what? Oh, my God! — deny that she loves you!"

"What, I? The Countess loves me? What are you saying, Madame?" cried Charny, in his turn.

"Miserable woman that I am, I speak the truth."

"The Countess loves me? Impossible!"

"And why? Do I not love you myself?"

"But in six years, if the Countess loved me, she would have told me so, or let me find it out!"

The moment was at hand when poor Marie Antoinette, suffering so much, felt that she must sink under this suffering, which was like a dagger buried in her heart.

"No!" she cried, "no! She would let you see nothing, she would say nothing; but if she said nothing, if she let you discover nothing, it was because she knew she could not be really your wife."

"The Countess could not be really my wife?" repeated Olivier.

"No! because, as she knew very well," continued the Queen, more and more crazed with her personal grief, "there is between you a secret which must kill your affection."

"A secret which must kill our affection?"

"Because she knew very well you would despise her the moment she uttered it."

"I — despise my Countess?"

"Unless one does not despise a young girl who is a wife without marriage, a mother without a husband."

It was now Charny's turn to grow pale as death, and lean on the armchair nearest him, as he said: "Madame, Madame, you have either said too much or too little, and I have the right to demand an explanation."

"An explanation, Monsieur? An explanation from me, the Queen?"

"Yes, Madame, I demand it!"

At that moment the door opened. "What is wanted?" asked the indignant Queen.

"Your Majesty has heretofore declared that you were always at home to Doctor Gilbert."

"Well?"

"The Doctor claims the honor of presenting his humble respects to your Majesty," said the attendant.

"Doctor Gilbert!" said the Queen. "Are you positive it is Doctor Gilbert?"

"Yes, Madame!"

"Let him enter, then, — let him enter!" said the Queen.

Turning to Charny she added, raising her voice : "You wish for some explanation in regard to Madame de Charny. Wait! Ask that explanation of Doctor Gilbert, who is better able than anybody else to give it."

Meanwhile Gilbert entered. He heard Marie Antoinette's words, and remained upright and motionless on the threshold.

As to the Queen, throwing his brother's note to Charny, she took several steps towards her toilet-room ; but with a more rapid step Charny passed in front of her, barred the way, and grasped her wrist, as he said : "Pardon me, Madame, but this explanation must be made in your presence."

"Monsieur," said she, with feverish eyes, and between her set teeth, "I fear you forget that I am the Queen."

"You're an ungrateful woman, who calumniates her friend. You're a jealous woman, who slanders another woman,—the wife of a man who, in the last three days, has risked his life for you twenty times,—the wife of the Comte de Charny. It is here, in the presence of one who has insulted, who has defamed her, that justice shall be rendered. Sit you down, and listen!"

"Well, so be it!" said the Queen. — "Monsieur Gilbert," she continued, with a forced laugh, "you hear what the Count wishes."

"Monsieur Gilbert," said Charny, in a dignified and courteous tone, "you hear the Queen's commands."

Gilbert came forward, and looked sorrowfully at Marie Antoinette. "Oh Madame, Madame!" he murmured.

Then he added, turning to Charny : "Monsieur, what I have to say redounds to the glory of a woman and the shame of a man. A wretch, a peasant, a worm of the earth, loved Mademoiselle de Taverney. One day he

chanced to find her unprotected and in a swoon. Without respect for her youth, her beauty, her innocence, the wretch took advantage of her situation, and thus it was that this young girl became a wife without a husband, a mother without marriage. Mademoiselle de Taverney is an angel ! Madame de Charny is a martyr ! ”

Charny wiped the sweat from his brow as he said : “ I thank you, Monsieur Gilbert. ” Then he added, to the Queen : “ Madame, I was not aware that Mademoiselle de Taverney had been so unhappy. I was ignorant that she was so good. Otherwise, I beg you to believe, I should have fallen at her feet six years ago ; and then I should not have adored her as she deserves. ”

Bowing to the stupefied Queen, Charny went away, without that unhappy lady’s daring to make a motion to detain him ; but he heard the sad cry which she uttered as she saw the door shut between them.

Then she realized that on that door, as above the gate of hell, the hand of the demon of jealousy had just written that awful sentence, which signifies that hope is forever left behind :

LASCIATE OGNI SPERANZA.

CHAPTER XII.

DATE LILIA : RING IN THE LILIES.

LET us see how it had fared with Andrée, while the scene just described was taking place between Charny and the Queen, wherein a long series of heart-troubles came to an abrupt termination.

For us, already acquainted with the state of her heart, it is easy to imagine how Andrée suffered on account of Isidore's departure.

Conjecturing that the project in which the brothers were engaged was the royal flight, she trembled equally at the thought of its success or failure.

If the project succeeded, she knew enough of Charny's devotion to the royal family, to be sure he would not forsake them in exile. If the enterprise failed, she knew Olivier's courage would make him fight against all obstacles whatsoever, as long as there was any hope, and even when all hope was lost.

From the moment when Isidore took his leave of her, the Countess's eye was constantly open for any glimmer of light, and her ear to catch the slightest rumor.

The next day, in common with all other Parisians, she learned that the King and his family had flown from Paris during that Monday night. No accident had signalized this abrupt departure.

That Charny was an important factor in this flight she had no doubt, and he was going farther and farther away from her. She heaved a deep sigh, and fell upon her knees to pray for their successful journey.

For two days Paris remained mute and echoless. On the morning of the third day a startling report ran through the city. The King had been arrested at Varennes. There were no details. Apart from this one thunder-clap, there was no noise. Beyond this one flash of lightning, all was night. The King had been arrested at Varennes, and that was all !

Andrée did not even know where Varennes was located. This little town, so fatally celebrated ever since, — whose very name became a terror to royalty, — at that time shared the obscurity which enshrouded, and still enshrouds, ten thousand French communities, which are just as unimportant and unknown as this one.

Andrée opened her geographical dictionary and read :

Varennes, in Argonne ; chief town in the district ; 1607 inhabitants.

Then she studied a map, and located Varennes, — placed in the middle of a triangle between Stenay, Verdun, and Châlons, on the edge of Argonne Forest, and on the banks of a little river. It was on this obscure spot that France now concentrated its attention. There were enshrined the thoughts, hopes, and fears of a nation.

Little by little, in the track of this stupendous news, came secondary information ; as at sunrise, after the grand total has been drawn from its chaos by the flooding light, the details come into view, one by one. For Andrée, these details were of vast importance.

It was said that the Marquis de Bouillé had pursued the arrested party, attacked the escort, and had been driven back after a fierce fight, leaving the royal family in the hands of the victorious Patriots. Charny must have taken part in this combat ; and if so he would have

been the last to retire from the fight, even if he did not perish on the field of battle.

Presently it was said that one of three guardsmen who accompanied the King had been killed. Then the name came to light ; only it was not known which Charny was killed, the Count or Viscount, Isidore or Oliver. It was a Charny, and nobody could say more. During two days, while that question was undecided, Andrée's heart endured inexpressible agonies.

At last the return of the royal party was announced for Saturday, June 26. The august prisoners had slept at Meaux. Calculating time and space, in the ordinary way of travel, the King would reach Paris before noon ; and if he returned to the Tuileries by the most direct route, he would re-enter Paris through the Faubourg Saint Martin.

By eleven o'clock — veiled, and wearing a very plain dress — Andrée was at the barrier. There she waited four hours, — till three o'clock.

At that hour the first billows of the multitudinous human sea, driving everything before it, announced that the King would make the circuit of Paris, and enter the city proper by the barrier at the end of the Champs Élysées.

There was the whole city to cross, and Andrée must go afoot ; for nobody dared drive a carriage through the dense crowd which everywhere filled the principal streets. Never had the Boulevards been so obstructed since the capture of the Bastille, nearly two years before.

Andrée did not hesitate, but took her way to the Champs Élysées, where she arrived among the first. There she waited three more hours, — three mortal hours, — till it was between six and seven o'clock.

At last the procession appeared, if procession it can be

called. We have already learned the order and circumstances of the march.

Andrée saw the coach pass by ; and she uttered a cry of great joy, for she recognized Charny on the outside seat.

Another cry responded, which sounded like the echo of her own ; only it was a cry of despair. Andrée turned towards the side whence came this cry. A young girl was supported by the arms of three or four kind-hearted persons, who were trying to give her relief. She appeared a prey to the most violent despair.

Perhaps Andrée would have given more efficient attention to this girl, had she not heard, on all sides, muttered imprecations against the three men on the outside seat of the royal coach. On them was launched the wrath of the populace. These three were the scapegoats of royalty's great treason, and would undoubtedly be torn into pieces as soon as the carriage reached its destination.

One of these three scapegoats was Charny. Andrée resolved to do all she could to enter the gardens of the Tuileries. To do that she must circumnavigate the multitude, and return by the waterside, — that is, by the Quai de la Conférence, — and get into the garden, if such a thing were possible, by way of the Quai des Tuileries. She went through the Rue Chaillot, and by a smaller cross-street, she reached the riverside.

By dint of many experiments, and at the risk of being crushed twenty times over, she reached the gateway ; but there was such a jam about the place where the carriage stopped, that she could not dream of getting into the front ranks.

From the terrace nearest the water Andrée thought she could look over the heads of the crowd. To be sure, the distance was too great for her to distinguish the

details or learn anything definite. Never mind ! It was better to be able to hear a little and see a little, than to be able to see and hear nothing at all.

She accordingly ascended the terrace on the side towards the Seine. Thence she could indeed see the royal coach, and the seats on the top of it. She could see Charny and the two bodyguards. Little did Charny suspect that, a hundred rods away, there was a heart beating violently for him. Doubtless — so she believed — he had at that moment not a single thought for Andrée. He was thinking only of the Queen, and forgot his own safety in watching over hers. Oh, if Andrée had but known that Charny was at that very instant pressing her letter against his heart, and mentally offering to her his last sigh, for he supposed the next moment he might breathe his last breath !

At last the coach halted, amidst hooting, howling, and shouting. In an instant there was a tremendous noise, a great hubbub, and a mighty tumult about that coach. Bayonets, pikes, and swords were raised. One seemed to be looking upon a rye-field of iron, bending before a storm.

The three men whom Andrée was watching were precipitated from their seats, and vanished, as if they had tumbled into a gulf. Then there was such an eddy amidst the multitude, that the rear ranks crowded backward, and were jammed against the stone abutment of the terrace.

Andrée was now enveloped in a cloud of agony. She could see nothing, hear nothing. With palpitating breath and extended arms she threw a few inarticulate sounds into the midst of this terrible concert, made up of maledictions, blasphemies, and death-cries.

Then she could no longer take note of what was going

on about her. The earth was in a whirl, the sky turned red, and a murmur, like that of the sea, surged in her ears. It was the blood mounting from her heart to her head, and overwhelming the brain. Then she fell down, half swooning, but knowing that she must be alive, because she suffered.

A refreshing coolness brought Andrée to herself. One woman was pressing to Andrée's forehead a handkerchief wet with water from the river; while another was compelling her to inhale the pungency from a vial of salts. She recognized the second of these two women as the one whom she had seen sinking at the barrier, as Andrée was sinking now; but Andrée did not know that they were instinctively drawn together by unknown ties, which bound the sadness of that young girl to her own.

Returning to herself, Andrée's first question was :
"Are they dead?"

Compassion is intelligent. Those who were near Andrée understood that she was agitated by her thoughts of those three men, whom she had just seen so cruelly endangered.

"No, they are saved!" was the response.

"All three?" she asked.

"All three, — yes."

"God be praised! — Where are they?"

"They say they're in the palace."

"In the palace? Thanks!"

Rising, and shaking her head, her gaze still somewhat wild, Andrée left the garden by the gateway leading to the waterside, in order to re-enter it again by the wicket leading into the Louvre Palace, adjoining the Tuileries. She thought, with reason, that the crowd would be less compact on that side. In fact the Rue Orties was nearly empty.

Crossing an angle of Place du Carrousel she entered the Princes Courtyard, and looked for the porter. This man knew the Countess, having seen her go in and out of the palace during a day or two after the royal return from Versailles, in the autumn of 1789. Then he saw her go out one day, never to return again, — the day when she was pursued by Sebastien, and took the boy away in her carriage.

The porter consented to go after information. By the interior corridors he could speedily reach the heart of the palace. He learned that the three officers were all right. Monsieur de Charny, safe and sound, had first retired to his chamber; but fifteen minutes later he came out again, wearing his uniform as a marine officer, and reported himself to the Queen, in whose apartments he must be at that moment.

Andrée offered a reward to the man who brought her this good news; and then, stunned and trembling, she asked for a glass of water. Ah! Charny was at least safe!

After again thanking the kind-hearted porter, Andrée wended her way to her home in Rue Coq Héron. Once within its protection, she fell, not into an armchair or upon a sofa, but upon her prayer-stool.

It was not a verbal prayer she offered. There are times when our gratitude towards God is so great that words fail us, — when the hands, the eyes, the whole body, the whole heart, and the whole soul are raised to God.

She was absorbed in this happy ecstasy when she heard the door open. Slowly she turned, not understanding why any earthly noise should summon her from so deep a reverie. There stood Andrée's *femme de chambre*, looking for her mistress, who was almost lost in the obscurity of the room.

Behind the *femme de chambre* was a shadow, whose outlines were undecided in the darkness; but Andrée's instinct at once gave to that shadow distinct outlines and a name, even before the *femme de chambre* had time to announce the Count, Andrée's legal husband.

Andrée tried to rise from her knees, but her strength failed. Her knees fell again upon the cushion. Half facing around, she rested her arm on the slope of her priedieu, murmuring: "The Count, the Count!" Though he stood there before her eyes she could not believe him present.

Unable to speak she nodded for him to come in. The chambermaid stood aside to let Charny pass, and then shut the door. Charny and his Countess were alone.

"They told me you had come in, Madame. Am I indiscreet in following you so closely?"

"No!" replied Andrée, in tremulous tones, "no! You are welcome, Monsieur. I was so anxious that I have been out to learn what was taking place."

"You have been out? How long?"

"Since morning, Monsieur. First I went to the Saint Martin Barrier and then to the end of the Champs Élysées. There I saw — I saw —" She hesitated! — "I saw the royal family. — I saw you, and I was reassured, — at least momentarily; but everybody was alarmed on your account, when the time should come to leave the royal coach. Then I returned to the Tuileries Gardens. Ah! then I thought I should die."

"Yes!" said Charny, "the press was great. You were crowded, almost stifled! — I can understand —!"

"No, no!" said Andrée, shaking her head. "Oh no, it was n't that! At last I made inquiries, I heard of your safety. Then I came home, and — as you see, I am on my knees. I have been praying, — I — thanking God!"

"As you are on your knees, Madame, as you are in communion with God, do not rise without remembering in your petitions my poor brother!"

"Monsieur Isidore? Then it was indeed he! Unfortunate boy!" and as she spoke, she let her head fall upon her hands.

Charny took a few paces forward, and looked, with a profound expression of tender melancholy, upon this pure woman, as she prayed. There were also in his gaze elements of sympathy, pity, and gentleness, and something like repressed desire. Had not the Queen told him — or rather had she not allowed the strange revelation to escape her — that Andrée loved him?

Her prayer finished, the Countess turned towards him, and said:

"And so Isidore is dead?"

"Dead, Madame, — dead, like poor George; and he died for the same cause, and in the fulfilment of similar duties."

"And amidst the great sorrow which you must have felt over your brother's death, you have found time to think of me, Monsieur?" said Andrée, in such feeble tones that her words could hardly be understood.

Fortunately Charny listened with both heart and ears. "Madame," he said, "did you not charge my brother with an errand for me?"

"Monsieur!" stammered Andrée, partly raising herself, and regarding the Count with anxiety.

"Did you not give him a letter to my address?"

"Monsieur!" repeated Andrée, with quivering voice.

"After poor Isidore's death, his papers were handed to me, Madame, and your letter was among those papers."

"And you read it?" cried she, hiding her face in both hands.

"Madame, I was not to know the contents of that

letter unless I was mortally wounded ; and, as you see, I am safe and sound."

"And the letter—?"

"Is here and intact, Madame, just as you gave it to Isidore."

"Oh!" murmured Andrée; as she received the letter, "what you have done is either very kind or very cruel."

Charny extended his arms, and clasped Andrée's hand in both of his. She made a movement to withdraw her hand ; but as Charny persisted, saying, "By your leave, Madame!" she heaved a sigh, almost of dread ; but, powerless against her own heart, she left her tremulous and moist hand in his.

Embarrassed, not knowing which way to look, she was unable to escape Charny's ardent gaze, which was fixed on herself ; and she could not withdraw, leaning, as she still was, against her prie Dieu.

At last she said : "I understand, Monsieur, and you have come to return me that letter?"

"For that, Madame, and for something else. — I have to ask your pardon, my Countess."

Andrée was thrilled to the core of her heart. This was the first time, so far as she could remember, that Charny had ever given her this title, without preluding it with the word *Madame*, or some more formal prefix. Then his voice pronounced the phrase, *my Countess*, with an inflection of infinite kindness.

At last she said : "My pardon, Monsieur? On what account, may I ask?"

"For the manner in which I have behaved towards you during the last six years!"

She looked at him in unfeigned surprise. "Have I ever complained, Monsieur?"

"No, Madame, — because you are an angel!"

In spite of herself her eyes grew dim, and she felt tears on her eyelids.

"You are weeping, Andrée?"

"Oh!" she exclaimed, bursting into tears, "forgive me, Monsieur, but I am not used to hearing you talk to me in this way. Ah, my God, my God!"

With an effort she rose to her feet, and then sank upon a lounge, burying her face in her hands. Presently she lowered her hands and said, shaking her head mournfully: "Indeed, I am but a foolish woman —!"

Then she paused suddenly. While her eyes were hidden, Charny had fallen upon his knees before her. "What? You on your knees, — at my feet?" she said.

"Did I not say I had come to ask your pardon?"

"At my knees, — at my feet?" she repeated, like one who could not believe her eyes.

"Andrée, you have taken away your hand!" and again Charny offered his hand to the young wife; but she recoiled, with an expression which resembled fear, as she asked: "What does this mean?"

"Andrée!" said Charny, in his softest tones, "it means that I love you."

She pressed a hand upon her heart and uttered a cry. Then she sprang to her feet, as if moved by an unseen spring. Pressing her temples between her hands she echoed his words: "He loves me! He loves me! Oh, but it's impossible!"

"Say it may be impossible for you to love me, but do not say it is impossible for me to love you."

She looked down upon Charny, as if to ascertain if he were speaking the truth. The Count's great black eyes spoke far more eloquently than his tongue. If she doubted his words, she could not doubt his face.

"Oh my God, my God!" she moaned, "was ever in this world a creature so unhappy as myself?"

"Andrée, say you love me! or, if you cannot say you love me, at least say you do not hate me."

"I?—hate you?" and her eyes, usually so calm, so limpid, so serene, flashed with unwonted light. "Oh Monsieur, you would indeed be unjust, if you mistook for dislike the sentiment you rouse in me."

"If not antipathy and not love, what then is this sentiment, Andrée?"

"It is not love, because I have no right to love you. Did you not hear me just now cry aloud, before God, that I was the unhappiest woman on earth?"

"And why may you not love me, when I love you so much,—with all the strength of my nature?"

"That is what I do not wish to tell you! That is what I cannot, dare not tell you!" answered Andrée, wringing her hands.

Charny's voice grew softer and softer, as he said: "But what if this which you dare not, cannot, will not say, had already been told me by another?"

Andrée laid both hands on Charny's shoulders as she uttered a startled groan.

"What if I knew it all?" continued Charny.

"Oh God!"

"And what if I found you all the nobler, all the worthier, because of your misfortune? What if it is my knowledge of this which decided me to come and say that I love you?"

"If you have done this, Monsieur, you are the noblest and most generous of men."

"I love you, Andrée! I love you! I love you!" repeated Charny.

"Oh my God!" said she, lifting her hands to Heaven,

"I did not know there could be so much joy for me in the world."

"But now it is your turn, Andrée! Say that you love me!"

"Oh no, I dare not!" said Andrée; "but read that letter, which was to have been given you on your death-bed!" and she offered the Count the letter he had brought her.

While she covered her face with both hands, Charny broke the seal of that letter. As he read the first lines he uttered a cry. Then he removed Andrée's hands from her eyes, and at the same time folded her to his heart, as he passionately exclaimed: "Saintly creature! So thou hast loved me ever since our first meeting, six years ago. How ought I to love thee, to make thee forget all thy sufferings."

"My God!" murmured Andrée, bending like a reed under the weight of so much happiness, "if this is a dream, never let me awake from it, or I shall die in the waking!"

So let us forget those who are so happy, while we tell of others, who still suffer, who struggle, who hate; and perhaps the evil destiny of Charny and Andrée will also pass them by.

CHAPTER XIII.

A LITTLE SHADOW AFTER THE SUNSHINE.

ON July 16, 1791, some twenty days after the events just described, two new personages whom we have till now delayed making known to our readers, in order that they might be presented in their most important period, are writing at the same table, in a little parlor opening on the fourth flat of the Hotel Britannique, situated on the Rue Guénégaud.

The little parlor is connected by one door with a modest dining-room, wherein may be seen the movables usually found in furnished lodgings, while another door opens into a chamber, where stand twin bedsteads.

The two writers are of opposite sexes, and each merits particular mention.

The man appears to be about sixty. He is tall and spare, and has the air of being both austere and impassioned. The straight lines of his face bespeak the calm and serious thinker, in whom upright and stern mental qualities dominate the imaginative fancies.

The woman would hardly be credited with years more than thirty or thirty-two, although in reality she is already over thirty-six. By a certain elasticity of the blood, by certain brilliant hues in her complexion, it is easy to see that she comes from plebeian stock. She has charming eyes, of that variable tint which takes on different shades of gray, green, and blue, — eyes which are at once mild and firm. Her mouth is large, but

graced with rosy lips and white teeth. Both chin and nose are uptilted a trifle. Her hands are beautiful, as well as strong. Her form is undulating, womanly, and even voluptuous. Her throat is marvellous in outline, and she has the hips of the Syracusan Venus.

This man is Jean Marie Roland de la Plâtière, born in 1732, at Villefranche, near Lyons. The woman is Manon Jeanne Phlipon, born at Paris, in 1754. They have been married about eleven years, — that is, since 1780.

We have said that this woman arose from the people, as is proven by her names. Her baptismal names, Manon Jeanne, and her family name, Phlipon, alike indicate her origin. The daughter of an engraver, she worked at the same trade till the age of twenty-five, when she married Roland, who was two and twenty years her senior. Then she became a copyist, translator, compiler. Such works as one on Pyrotechnics, another on the Manufacture of Wool, and a Dictionary of Manufactures, absorbed the freshest years of her rich nature in crude and uncongenial labor; while her life remained free from error, almost from passion, — not through barrenness of heart, but through purity of soul.

In her relations to her husband, filial respect displaced womanly passion. Her affection was a species of chaste worship, outside of conjugal affinity, which often led her to quit her day's work at an early hour (though to do this she had afterwards to encroach upon the small hours of the night) in order to prepare a toothsome repast for the old man, whose enfeebled stomach could only bear certain peculiar kinds of food.

In 1789 Madame Roland was living an obscure and laborious life in the provinces. Her husband lived in the close, or purview, of La Plâtière, from which he

derived his surname. This court was situated at Villefranche, near Lyons, where they lived when both were roused by the cannons of the Bastille.

At this sound all that was grand, patriotic, saintly, and French awoke in the heart of this noble woman. France was no longer a kingdom; it was the Nation. It was not simply a country where people lived; it was Fatherland.

Then came the great Federation of 1790, in Paris, which was preceded, as may be remembered, by the lesser Federation at Lyons.

Jeanne Phlipon had been reared in her father's house on the Quai de l'Horloge, along the bank of the Seine, near the Palace of Justice. From her girlhood's window, as she gazed upon the blue sky, she could see the sun rise, and follow its course as far as the end of the Champs Élysées, where it seemed to sink into a hillock of green and leafy trees. She also saw arise that other sun, at three in the morning, on the heights of Fourvières, — a sun far more luminous, more absorbing, which men call Liberty. At the period of the Lyons Federation her observation embraced the whole of that grand reunion of citizens; and her heart was plunged into an ocean of fraternity, whence she emerged like Achilles, invulnerable except in one spot. It was in this spot that Cupid wounded her, though she did not fall a helpless victim before his attack.

On the evening of that glorious day, thoroughly enthusiastic over what she had seen, with the feeling of the poet as well as the historian, she penned a description of the Federative Festival. This account she sent to her friend Champagneux, editor-in-chief of "The Lyons Journal." Astonished, dazzled, awe-struck with this blazing recital, he published it in his paper; and the next

day, instead of the usual edition of twelve or fifteen hundred copies, this journal had to print sixty thousand.

In two words let us explain how it was that her poetic imagination and womanly heart embraced politics with such ardor. It was because Jeanne Phlipon, treated like an engraver's apprentice by her father, — it was because Madame Roland, treated like a secretary by her husband, — found, alike in the paternal home and the matrimonial residence, only the severer side of life. Madame Roland, through whose hands had never passed a frivolous book, found her greatest recreation, her supreme pastime, in such works as the "Official Report of the Electors of 1789" and the "Story of the Capture of the Bastille."

As to Roland, he was in himself an example of how chance or fate, through some apparently unimportant occurrence, may bring about immense changes in the career of a man or the existence of an empire.

He was the youngest of five brothers. They wished to make a priest of him, but he preferred to remain a man. At the age of nineteen he left the paternal mansion, on foot, alone, and without money. Traversing France he went to Nantes, took service with a shipowner, and was ordered to go to India. When the time came for his departure, at the very hour when he was due aboard the ship, he began to spit blood, and the physician straightway forbade his going to sea.

Had Cromwell sailed for America, instead of remaining in England, — detained by order of Charles the First, — mayhap the scaffold of Whitehall would never have been reared. If Roland had sailed for the Indies, perhaps the Tenth of August would never have found its historic place.

Unable to fulfil his agreement with the merchant,

Roland left Nantes and went to Rouen, where one of his relatives, upon whom he called, recognized the ability of the young man, and obtained him a position as Inspector of Manufactures.

Henceforth Roland's life became one of constant study and labor. Economy was his muse, and Commerce his inspiring god. He travelled, he edited the writings of others, he wrote essays on the breeding of sheep and on theories of mechanism. He wrote Letters from Sicily, from Italy, from Malta. He wrote also "The French Financier," and other works before alluded to, — which were copied by his wife, whom he espoused, as we have already stated, in 1780.

Four years afterward he went with her to England. On their return he sent her to Paris, to ask for a patent of nobility and solicit an appointment as Inspector at Lyons, instead of Rouen. As far as the appointment was concerned, her mission was a success. As to the letters of nobility, they were not granted. So Roland went to Lyons, where he belonged to the popular ranks in spite of himself, — whereto he was also impelled by his instincts and convictions.

When the Revolution broke out he was exercising his functions as Inspector of Commerce and Manufactures for the Lyons District; and at the dawn of this new and regenerating period, he and his wife felt germinating in their hearts that beautiful plant called Enthusiasm, with its leaves of gold and its diamond flower.

We have seen how Madame Roland wrote her account of the Lyons Federation; how the journal publishing it had to print sixty thousand copies; and how each National Guardsman, returning to his native village, town, or city, carried with him a portion of Madame Roland's heart.

As the journal did not name the author, and as the
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article itself was not signed, everybody was free to think that it was Liberty herself who came down to earth, and dictated to some unknown prophet the story of the festival, — as the angel dictated to Saint John the Revelation bearing his name.

The Rolands were full of faith, full of confidence, full of hope. They were living in a circle of friends, — Champagneux, Bosc, Lanthenas, and perhaps two or three others, — when this circle was enlarged by a new friend.

Lanthenas, who lived on very familiar terms with the Rolands, — passing days, weeks, months in their home, — one evening brought with him one of those Electors whose Official Report Madame Roland had so much admired.

This new-comer was Bancal des Issarts. He was a man thirty-nine years old, — handsome, unostentatious, noble, tender, and religious, without intellectual brilliancy, but with a generous heart and a loving soul. He had been a notary, but had given up his business in order to devote himself wholly to politics and philosophy.

At the end of a week spent in the Roland home, the new guest, their host, and Lanthenas agreed so well, — the group formed such a harmonious trinity in their devotion to country, their love of liberty, and their respect for all things holy, — that the three men resolved never to separate, but to live together and bear the expense in common. Especially when Bancal left them for a season was the need of this reunion peculiarly felt. Thus did Roland write :

Come, my friend. Why do you delay ? You have seen our free and open way of living and acting. It is not at my age that a man changes, whose life has never varied. We preach Patriotism. We elevate the soul. Lanthenas does duty as

physician ; and my wife is the sick-nurse of the district ; while you and I, — well, we manage the business of the society.

The union of these three well-to-do gentlemen furnished something like a small fortune. Lanthenas had some twenty thousand francs, Roland had sixty thousand, and Bancal a hundred thousand.

Roland fulfilled his mission as an apostle. In his rounds as Inspector he catechised the peasants of the countryside. An excellent pedestrian, this pilgrim of humanity, staff in hand, went north and south, east and west, everywhere sowing the new word of life, the fertile grain of liberty, — on the right and left, before and behind him.

Simple, eloquent, passionate, under his cool exterior, Bancal was truly a helper, a disciple, a second self for Roland. The notion never entered the head of the future colleague of Clavière and Dumouriez that Bancal might fall in love with his wife, and that she might reciprocate this sentiment. During five or six years had not Lanthenas, young man as he was, remained near this chaste, industrious, sober, pure woman, like a brother near his sister ? Was not Jeanne, Madame Roland, a very statue of Force and Virtue ?

Roland was therefore very happy when Bancal answered the billet just cited, with an affectionate letter full of tender allegiance. Roland received this letter while he was at Lyons, and immediately sent it to La Plâtière, where his wife was.

Do not read what I say ! Read Michelet, if you would have a clear analysis of that admirable woman whom we call Madame Roland !

She received that letter on one of those hot days when electricity courses through the air, when the coldest

hearts are animated, when marble itself sees visions and quivers with dream-life. It was already autumn, and yet a heavy storm was muttering in the sky.

Since the day when she first saw Bancal, new emotions had been awakened in the heart of this chaste woman. That heart opened, like the chalice of a flower, and gave out its perfume. A sweet song, like that of some bird in the deepest forest, was warbling in her ear. One could see that it was springtime in her fancy, and that she could now see beyond the mist — which heretofore had obstructed her view — those unknown fields, where the hand of the powerful machinist, whom we call Deity, was preparing a new outlook into life, full of odorous thickets, refreshing cascades, shady grassplots, and vistas of sunshine.

She had never really known love's passion ; but, like all women, she divined its nature. She understood the peril. Smiling through her tears, she went straight to her desk. Without hesitation, without circumlocution, she wrote to Bancal, exposing to him — poor wounded Chlorinda as she was — the flaw in her armor, avowing her sentiments, yet with the same breath killing the hope to which this avowal must give birth.

Bancal understood. No longer did he talk of rejoining their family, but went to England, where he remained two years.

Such hearts as these belong to classic antiquity. After all the tumults and passions of which we have been the mutual witnesses, it has seemed to me well to let my readers repose awhile in the shadow of such pure and refreshing beauty, strength, and virtue.

Let it not be said that we represent Madame Roland as otherwise than she really was, — chaste in her father's workshop, chaste in the chamber of her elderly spouse,

chaste by the cradle of her child. At an hour when one does not lie, standing face to face with the guillotine, she wrote : " I have always commanded my passions, and no woman ever lived freer from sensuality than myself."

Coldness must not be credited with the merit of her chastity. No ! The epoch in which she lived was an epoch of hatred, I know ; but it was also an epoch of love.

France set the example. This poor captive, long imprisoned, long in fetters, had shaken off her chains, and been restored to liberty. Like Marie Stuart, when she came from her prison-house, France wished to kiss the lips of all creation, and inspire it with her breath, that it might bring forth liberty for her country and independence for the world.

All these women loved holily, all these men loved ardently, — Lucile and Camille Desmoulins, Danton and his Louise, Mademoiselle de Kéralio and Robert, Sophie and Condorcet, Vergniaud and Mademoiselle Candaille. There was not one, even the cynical and sarcastic Robespierre, cutting and cold as the knife of the guillotine, who did not feel his heart throb before the hearthstone of love. Robespierre loved the daughter of his landlord, the carpenter, whose acquaintance we shall hereafter make.

Love is the one great virtue of the heart. Though the love we refer to was less pure, — that must be acknowledged ! — yet was it not as genuine as the love of Madame Tallien, as the love of Madame de Beauharnais, as the love of Madame de Genlis, — as the affection of all lovers whose whispered consolations illuminated the pale faces of their dying friends, even on the scaffold ?

At that happy epoch all the world was in love ; and love must be taken in all its senses. Some loved ideals,

and others loved matter. These loved their country, and those the human race. The need of love had been growing ever since Rousseau's time. One might have supposed it was necessary to hasten after love before it had flown,—that as they drew nearer the tomb, the gulf, the abyss, each heart palpitated with an unknown emotion, passionate and devouring. It seemed as if each bosom inhaled its breath from the universal fire-side, whereon all affections were merged in one universal love.

We have wandered far from the old husband and the young wife, writing in the fourth story of the Hotel Britannique. To them let us return anon.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FIRST REPUBLICANS.

ON February 20, 1791, Roland was sent from Lyons to Paris, as a special Deputy, to plead the cause of twenty thousand famished laborers.

He had been over four months in Paris when the startling events occurred at Varennes, — events which had such an influence over our personages, and over the destiny of France, that we have felt it our duty to devote many chapters to this subject.

In the interval between the royal return, June 26, and the date of the events now to be recorded, July 16, a great many things had come to light.

Everybody shouted, "The King is saved!" Everybody ran after the King. Everybody assisted in bringing him back to Paris; but when the King had returned, when once more the King was in Paris, when once more the King was in the Tuileries, — why, nobody knew what to do with him.

Everybody had an opinion. Opinions blew from all points of the compass, like the wind in a gale. Ill fares the ship at sea in such a storm!

On June 21, when the King's flight became known, the Cordelier Club issued a notice, signed by Legendre, the French butcher, whom the Queen (in her conversation with Barnave) referred to as a copy of the English butcher, Harrison.

For an epigram the placard bore the following stanza :

Si, parmi les Français, il se trouvait un traître,
 Qui regrettât les rois et qui voulût un maître,
 Que le perfide meure au milieu des tourments,
 Et que sa cendre soit abandonnée aux vents.

This epigram may be almost literally translated into English as follows :

If, among the French people, there liveth a traitor,
 Who regretteth our kings and who wisheth a master,
 May the false-hearted die amidst torments of mind,
 And his ashes be scattered on wings of the wind.

Although written by Voltaire, these verses are not remarkably well rhymed ; but they neatly expressed the ideas of those who issued the notice, and also lent a literary flavor to the placard.

This poster declared that all the members of the Cordelier Club had sworn to stab any tyrant who dared attack the country, liberty, or the Constitution.

As to Marat, who always marched on alone, — and who offered, as the excuse for his isolation, that turkeys train in flocks, while the eagle lives in solitude, — Marat proposed a dictatorship, as may be seen by the following paragraph in his journal :

Take a worthy Frenchman, some good Patriot, — take a citizen who, ever since the beginning of the Revolution, has shown the most intelligence, the most zeal, fidelity, and disinterestedness, — take such a one for a leader, without further delay, or the Revolutionary cause is lost !

All of which meant, *Take Marat !*

As to Prudhomme, he proposed neither a new man nor a new government ; yet he abominated the old dynasty, in the person of Louis Sixteenth and his descendants. Hear him :

On the next day but one the Dauphin was taken out for the air, on the terrace of the Tuileries, which looks out upon the river. Whenever they saw a sizable group of citizens a hireling grenadier took the child in his arms, and seated him on the stone parapet of the terrace; and the royal puppet, faithful to his morning's instructions, threw kisses to the populace. This was done to curry favor for his papa and mamma. Several spectators were cowardly enough to shout "Hurrah for the Dauphin!"

Citizens, be on your guard against such cajoleries from a Court which only fawns upon the people and grovels before them, when not itself the stronger.

After these paragraphs came certain historic citations:

It was on January 27, 1649, that the English Parliament condemned Charles the First to have his head cut off, for having tried to extend the royal prerogatives, and for maintaining the encroachments of his father, James the First. It was on January 30 that he expiated his misdeeds,—almost legalized by usage, and sustained by a numerous party; but the people made themselves heard, and Parliament declared the King a *fugitive*, *traitor*, and *public enemy*, and Charles Stuart was beheaded in front of the banquet-room of Whitehall Palace.

Bravo, Citizen Prudhomme! You are certainly not behindhand; and on January 21, 1793, when Louis Sixteenth takes his turn at decapitation, you may well claim the initiative step, having suggested this example as early as June 27, 1791.

It is true that Monsieur Prudhomme,—who must not be confounded with our witty friend Monnier, for the former was an honest man, though a fool,—it is true that Monsieur Prudhomme later became a Royalist and a Conservative, and published his "History of the

Crimes Committed during the Revolution." What a good thing is conscience!

The "Bouche de Fer" was more outspoken. No hypocrisy, no words of double meaning, no perfidy. It was Bonneville who edited it, — young Bonneville, — faithful, fearless, and admirably foolish fellow, who erred in regard to common affairs, but was never mistaken in great matters. It was published, this "Iron Mouth," in the Rue Ancienne Comédie, near the Odéon, two steps from the meeting-place of the Cordelier Club. This is what it said:

By the Constitutional oath the infamous word *king* has been effaced. No more kings for us! No more man-eaters! Often has the *name* been changed heretofore, but the *thing* has been retained. Now let us have no Regent, no Dictator, no Protector, no Orleans, no Lafayette. I like neither the son of Philippe d'Orleans, who to-day mounts guard at the Tuileries, nor his father, who is never seen at the Assembly, but who may constantly be seen on the Feuillant Terrace, at the gate of the palace. Must a nation be always under tutelage? Let our departments unite, and declare that they will have neither tyrants nor monarchs, neither protector nor regent, nor any such ghosts of royalty, — whose shadow is as fateful to the public weal as is the cursed Indian Upas to those who come beneath its shade.

It is not enough to pronounce the word *Republic*! Venice was a republic, but full of tyranny. What is needed is a National Commonwealth, a National Government. Call together the people in the light of the blessed sunshine. Proclaim to them Law as the only sovereign. Swear that Law alone shall reign. There is not a friend of liberty on earth who will not repeat that oath!

As to Camille Desmoulins, he mounted a chair in the gardens of the Palais-Royal, the usual scene of his ora-

torical exploits, and said: "Gentlemen, it will be a misfortune if this faithless man is brought back to us. What shall we do with him? He comes like Thersites, to shed the great tear of which Homer speaks. If he is brought back, I make a motion that he be three days exposed to public ridicule, with a red handkerchief on his head, and then conducted to the frontier by easy stages."

Let us own, of all the propositions offered, that this one, from that terrible fellow called Camille Desmoulins, was not the silliest.

One more word, to picture the general sentiment. It is Dumont who speaks, a Genevese, pensioned by England, and therefore not to be suspected of partiality towards France.

The people seem inspired with supreme wisdom. We are rid of a great embarrassment; but if the King has cleared out, the Nation remains. It is easy enough to get on with a kingless nation, but not with a nationless King.

Among all these utterances we can see that the word *republic* was not yet spoken, except by Bonneville. Neither Brissot nor Danton nor Robespierre — not even Pétion himself — dared utter that word. It frightened the Cordeliers, and was beneath the notice of the Jacobins.

On July 13 Robespierre said, on the platform: "I am neither a Republican nor a Monarchist."

If Robespierre had been driven to the wall, he would have been greatly embarrassed to say what he was.

Well, everybody was in just about that condition, except Bonneville, — and also except that lady who, sitting opposite her husband, on the fourth floor in the Rue

Guénégaud, was busily engaged in copying a political protest. On June 22, the Wednesday after the royal flight, she wrote:

Sentiments of republicanism, of indignation against Louis the Sixteenth, and of hatred of kings in general, are breathed on all sides.

This sentiment, as we see, the *sentiment* of republicanism, was in every heart, but the word *republic* was spoken by few lips. Above all, the Assembly was hostile thereto.

It is the great misfortune of assemblies and parliaments to come to a stop as soon as they are elected, — to no longer take note of events, no longer march on with the national spirit. They do not follow whither the people lead, and yet they claim to still represent the people.

This is what the Assembly said:

The customs of France are not Republican.

The Assembly had a tussle with Monsieur de la Palisse, and in our opinion got the better of that illustrious truth-teller. What was to give Republican manners and habits and customs to France? The monarchy? No, the monarchy was not so stupid. The monarchy wanted obedience, servility, corruption, and the monarchy therefore cultivated the fashions of corruption, servility, and obedience. First get your Republic, and Republican manners will come in good time.

There was one moment when the proclamation of a republic would have been very easy; and that was when the King was on the wing, taking the Dauphin along with him. Instead of being pursued and brought back,

the royal fugitives should have been furnished with the best horses from the post-stables, and with vigorous postilions, with whips in their hands and spurs on their boots. Then the courtiers should have been driven away after the King, and the priests after the courtiers; and the door should have been shut behind them. Even Lafayette, who sometimes had flashes of sense, though he rarely had ideas, enjoyed one of these flashes.

At six in the morning of June 21 somebody came to inform Lafayette that the royal family had run away. It required all the pains in the world to wake him up, for he generally slept that historic "sleep of the just" for which he had already been reproached at Versailles.

"Gone? Impossible! Why, I left Gouvion leaning sleepily against the door of their bedrooms." So spake the General.

Forthwith he left his bed, dressed himself, and went downstairs. At the door he met Bailly, who was Mayor of Paris, and Beauharnais, the President of the Assembly. Bailly's face was as yellow and his nose as long as ever. Beauharnais was in consternation.

Curious, was it not, that Josephine's first husband, whose death, on the scaffold, left the way clear for his widow to ascend the throne as Napoleon's wife, should have felt such consternation over the flight of Louis the Sixteenth?

"What a misfortune," cried Bailly, "that the Assembly is not yet in session!"

"Yes," said Beauharnais, "a great misfortune!"

"Wait a bit!" said Lafayette. "Is he really gone?"

"Alas, yes!" responded the two astute statesmen, simultaneously.

"Why *alas*?" asked Lafayette.

"What? Can't you understand?" cried Bailly. "Why, he'll come back with Prussians, Austrians, and all the Court fugitives at his heels; because he'll force us into civil war or foreign war."

"Then," said Lafayette, hardly convinced, "you think that the public welfare demands the return of the King?"

"Yes!" was the united reply of Mayor Bailly and President Beauharnais.

"In that case we must send after him," said Lafayette; and he wrote the following order:

The enemies of our country having abducted the King, the National Guards are ordered to arrest them.

Take notice that all the politics of 1791, and the entire aim of the National Assembly, turned upon this one point: as the King was a French necessity, and must be brought back, it must not be said that he had escaped of his own accord, but that he had been abducted by his enemies.

However, Lafayette was not convinced; so he sent Romeuf on the royal track, with instructions not to be too much in a hurry. The young aide would have taken the road opposite to the King's, so as not to overtake him. Indeed he did start the wrong way, but unfortunately Billot was on the right track.

When the Assembly heard the news it was terrified. Indeed, on his departure the King had left a menacing letter, and it was perfectly evident that he had gone over to the national enemies, with whom he would return, and try to bring France to reason. On the other hand the Royalists raised their heads and lifted their voices. One of them, Suleau, wrote as follows:

All who wish to be included in the amnesty which we offer our enemies in the name of the Prince de Condé, may inscribe their names in our office, between now and the month of August. We have fifteen hundred registers for the accommodation of the public.

One of the most frightened citizens was Robespierre. The session of the Assembly being suspended from three till half-past five, he ran to Pétion. The weak man sought the support of the strong.

According to Robespierre, Lafayette was but an accomplice of the Court. He was agitated over nothing less than a prospective Saint Bartholomew Massacre among the Deputies. "I shall be one of the first to suffer," he said. "I have not over twenty-four hours to live."

Pétion's character, on the contrary, was calm and lymphatic, and he saw things differently. He replied: "Oh, now we know the King so well, we can act accordingly."

Brissot came in, — one of the most progressive men of that epoch, and a writer for "The Patriot." He exclaimed to his friends: "A new journal is to be founded, of which I'm to be the editor."

"What is it?"

When he explained that it was to be called "The Republican," Robespierre made a grimace and said: "I wish you would explain to me what a republic is."

They were there, in Pétion's apartments, when the two Rolands came to see their friend. The husband was austere and resolute, as always. The wife, with her beautiful, sparkling, and speaking eyes, was calm and jubilant, rather than dismayed. They had come from home, and had seen the notice issued by the Cordeliers. Like the Cordeliers, the Rolands did not believe a king was of the least earthly importance to a nation.

The courage of this husband and wife restored Robespierre's. He returned to the session of the Assembly as an observer, ready to profit by any turn of affairs, as the fox watches the terrier from his hiding-place. Towards nine o'clock in the evening he found that the tendency of the members was towards sentimentalism, that they were preaching fraternity; and that, to join example to theory, they would soon adjourn in a body to the Jacobin Club, with whom they had been on bad terms, — the Deputies even calling the Jacobins a band of assassins.

Robespierre slipped from his bench, crawled towards the door, squirmed through it without being noticed, ran to the old chapel where the Jacobins were assembled, mounted the platform, denounced the King, denounced the cabinet, denounced Bailly, denounced Lafayette, denounced the entire Assembly, repeated his fable of the morning, described an imaginary Saint Bartholomew's Day, and finished by laying his existence upon the altar of Patriotism.

When Robespierre spoke on his own account he always attained a certain standard of eloquence. At the very idea that the virtuous, the austere Robespierre was incurring any great danger, the audience sobbed. "If thou diest, we will die with thee!" cried a voice. "Yes, yes! All of us, all of us!" repeated a chorus of auditors. Some raised their hands to swear it. Some drew their swords, while others fell upon their knees, with their arms raised to Heaven. Everybody lifted his arms heavenward in those days. It was the fashion of the epoch. Look at David's picture of the Oath in the Tennis Court.

Madame Roland was there, not too well understanding how Robespierre was running any special danger; but she was a woman, and consequently accessible to emotion.

The excitement was great. She also was moved, as she herself acknowledges.

At that moment Danton entered the chapel. As his popularity was growing, it was for him to assail the wavering popularity of Lafayette.

Wherefore this general dislike of Lafayette? Perhaps because he was an honest man, and always the dupe of those who appealed to his generosity.

When the members of the Assembly were announced, when Lafayette and Lameth, two mortal enemies, entered the hall arm in arm, in order to set an example of fraternity, the cry was heard on all sides: "Danton to the platform! To the platform! Danton!"

Robespierre asked nothing better than to yield his place. Robespierre, as we have said, was a fox, and not a mastiff. He pursued the absent enemy, sprang upon him from behind, pinned his shoulders, gnawed his skull to the quick, but rarely attacked him face to face.

The tribune was vacant, waiting for Danton; only it was difficult for Danton to take the stand. If he was the only man able to assail Lafayette, Lafayette was perhaps the one man whom Danton dared not attack.

Why? Ah, we will tell you. There was much of Mirabeau in Danton, as there was much of Danton in Mirabeau. They had the same temperament, the same need of sensual pleasure, the same need of money; and they consequently offered the same facilities for corruption.

We are assured that, like Mirabeau, Danton received Court gold. When? By what means? How much? No one knew; but that he had received it, everybody was sure. At least, so it was said.

Here is the reality underlying all this talk. Danton had just sold to the ministry his position as Advocate to

the King's Council, and it was said he received from the ministry four times as much as the office was really worth, or as appeared on the surface.

This was true; only the secret was between three persons: the seller, Danton; the buyer, Monsieur de Montmorin; the negotiator, Lafayette.

If Danton attacked Lafayette, the General might throw into Danton's face the whole story of this sale of an office for four times its value.

Any other man would have shrunk back. Danton, on the contrary, went straight on. He knew Lafayette, and how the generosity of his heart oft degenerated into asininity; in proof whereof we may recall his action in 1830, — forty years later.

Danton said to himself that Montmorin, the friend of Lafayette, — Montmorin, who had signed the King's passport, — was too much compromised at that moment for Lafayette to throw this new stone, which might prove a boomerang.

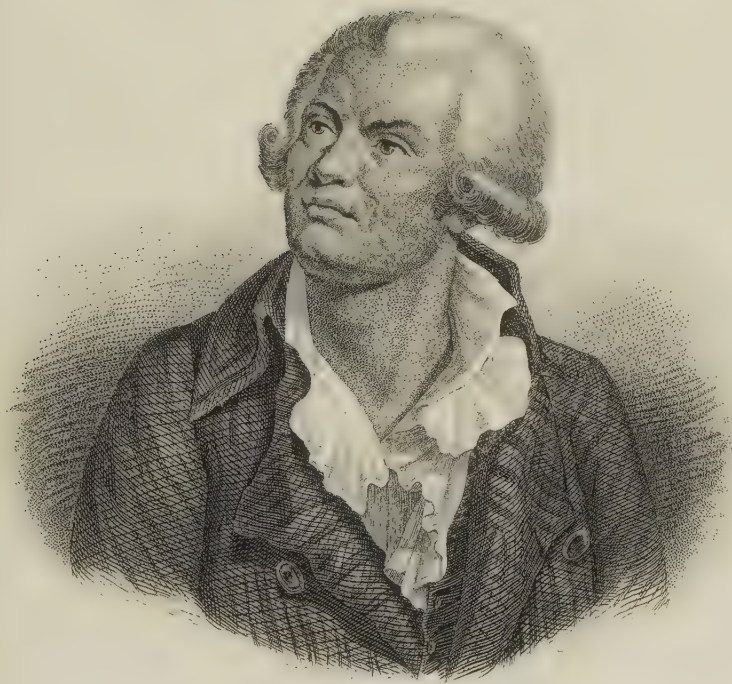
Danton ascended the platform. His speech was not long.

"Monsieur President, I accuse Lafayette. Let the traitor come here. Let two scaffolds be prepared, and I will consent to mount one of them, if he is not found worthy to mount the other."

The *traitor* did not come. He was there already. He heard the terrible accusation from Danton's mouth; but as Danton had foreseen, Lafayette was too generous to respond.

Lameth took this duty upon himself. Over Danton's stream of lava Lameth poured the lukewarm water of his ordinary pastorals, and preached fraternity.

Then came Sieyès, who also preached fraternity. Then Barnave preached fraternity.



These three popular orators finished by overpowering Danton's influence. The observers were glad Danton attacked Lafayette; but they were also glad that Lameth, Sieyès, and Barnave defended him; and when Lafayette and Danton left the Jacobin Club, it was Lafayette who was accompanied with torches and acclamations.

The Court party claimed a great victory in this ovation to Lafayette. The two great powers of the day had been beaten in the persons of their chiefs, — the Jacobins, in Robespierre, the Cordeliers, in Danton.

It is very evident that it will take another chapter to describe the protest which Madame Roland copied, as she sat face to face with her husband, in that little parlor on the fourth floor of the Hotel Britannique.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ENTRE-SOL OF THE TUILERIES.

Now we must learn the contents of the protest which Madame Roland was copying ; but in order for the reader to become familiar with the situation, and see his way clearly through one of the darkest and most mysterious periods of the Revolution, let him go with us through the Tuileries, on the night of July 15, 1791.

Behind the door of a suite of apartments opening upon an obscure and deserted corridor, situated in the entre-sol of the palace, stands a woman "with an attent ear," and her hand on the key, who trembles at every step which rouses an echo in her neighborhood.

If we are ignorant who the woman is, it will be difficult for us to recognize her ; for not only does darkness reign in this corridor in the daytime, but it is now night, and, either accidentally or intentionally, the wick of the one argand lamp, which burns near by, is turned down so far as to be nearly extinguished.

Moreover, the second room in the suite is the only one lighted, and it is against the door of the first room the woman stands listening and trembling.

Who is the woman who thus watches? Marie Antoinette ! For whom doth she wait ? Barnave !

Oh, superb daughter of Maria Theresa, who could have conjectured, on the day when you were consecrated as Queen of France, that there would come a time, when, concealed behind the door of your *femme de chambre's*

rooms, trembling with fear and hope, you would await the arrival of a petty lawyer from Grenoble, — you, who so often disappointed Mirabeau, and deigned to receive but one visit from him?

Let there be no mistake, however. It is political interest which leads the Queen to thus await Barnave. In that suspended breath, in those nervous movements, in that hand which freezes to the key, the heart counts for nothing; pride only is concerned.

We say *pride*; for it is evident, despite the thousand persecutions of which the King and Queen have been the butt since their return, inasmuch as their lives are now safe, all questions are summed up in these few words: Shall the Varennes fugitives lose the rest of their power, or shall they reconquer the power already lost?

On that fatal evening when Charny quitted the Tuileries, nevermore to return, the Queen's heart ceased to throb with any tender sentiment. During several days she remained indifferent to everything, even to insults; but little by little she perceived that two traits in her powerful organization were still alive, pride and hatred, and she came to herself in order to hate and be avenged.

Not revenge on Charny did she seek, nor did she hate Andrée. When she thought of them, it was herself whom the Queen despised, and on herself she would be revenged; for she was too truthful not to see that on her side were all the wrongs, and on theirs all the devotion.

If she could have hated *them*, she would have been happy. What she did hate, from the bottom of her heart, was the populace, who had laid hands on her, as if she were an ordinary fugitive from justice, — the people who pursued her with insults, covered her with

shame, filled her with disgust. Yes, she hated the people who once called her Madame Deficit and Madame Veto, who now called her *that Austrian woman*, and who, in the future, were to call her the Widow Capet; and if ever she could be avenged, she meant to be.

Now that which summoned Barnave to her on July 15, 1791, at nine in the evening, — while Madame Roland, in that little parlor on the fourth floor of the Hotel Britannique, was copying that protest of whose contents we are still in ignorance, — was perhaps impotency and despair; but it was possibly also that divine recompense which we call Vengeance.

The situation was grave. Thanks to Lafayette and the National Assembly, the first blow had been parried with the shield of the Constitution. The King had not fled! Oh, no! He had been abducted, — that was all!

We must not however forget the bulletin issued by the Cordelier Club; we must not forget Marat's proposal for a dictatorship; we must not forget the petty diatribe of Citizen Prudhomme, about the Dauphin's outing on the terrace; we must not forget the whimsical utterances of Bonneville; we must not forget the suggestion that the King should be carried back to the frontier as a public curiosity; we must not forget the clever axiom of the Genevese Dumont; and we must not forget the establishment of a new journal, which Brissot was to control, and which was to be called "The Republican."

Would you like to see the prospectus of that journal? It is short, but explicit. It was written in English, by Thomas Paine, and then translated into French, by a young officer who had fought in the American Revolution; and it was published over the signature, Duchâtelet.

How strange was the fatality which, from the four corners of the world, called together new enemies of the crumbling throne. Thomas Paine! What brought him hither, — that man who belonged to all countries, England, America, France, who had tried all trades, as manufacturer, schoolmaster, tax-gatherer, sailor, journalist? What he came for was to mingle his breath with the storm which whistled pitilessly over a dying flame.

Here is the prospectus of "The Republican" of 1791, that journal which appeared, or was on the eve of publication at the very time when Robespierre was asking what a republic could be :

We have just proved that a king's absence is worth more than his presence. He deserted his throne, and this amounted to abdication. The Nation will never regain its confidence in the perjured runaway.

Was his flight the work of others, or himself? What matters that? Whether a knave or an idiot, he is equally unworthy of power. We are well rid of him, and he is free from us. He is now a simple individual, Louis de Bourbon. As for his safety, that is certain, for France will never dishonor herself; but royalty is finished. What is an office worth, when left to the chance of birth, and liable to be filled by an idiot? It is a cipher, a nonentity.

One may understand the effect produced by such a bulletin, pasted on the walls of Paris. Malouet, the Constitutionalist, was amazed. Affrighted and out of breath he entered the National Assembly, denounced the prospectus, and demanded the arrest of its authors.

"So be it!" said Pétion; "but let us first read the prospectus."

Pétion, one of the few Republicans then converted in France, knew this prospectus perfectly well. Malouet, who denounced it, was reluctant to have it read. What

if the Deputies should applaud it? and he was almost certain they would applaud it.

Two members of the Assembly, Chabroud and Chapelier, tried to repair the blunder of their colleague, by saying: "The press is free, and every one, wise or foolish, has a right to set forth his opinions. Let us pay no heed to the utterance of frenzy, but pass on to the business of the day!" and this the Assembly did; so let *us* talk no more about it.

Nevertheless, here was the hydra which menaced the monarchy. Cut off one head; and even as you push it aside, another stings you.

The conspiracy of *Monsieur* with Favras had not been forgotten, — the time when it was proposed to get the King out of the way and appoint *Monsieur* as Regent. Now nobody thought about *Monsieur*. He had fled at the same time as the King; only he was more lucky than his brother, and reached the frontier.

But the Duc d'Orléans still remained. He remained with his sworn friend, with the man who constantly urged him forward, — Laclos, the author of "Dangerous Entanglements."

There was in existence a decree concerning a regency, — a decree mouldering in the archives. Why not utilize that old decree?

In its issue of June 28 a certain journal offered the regency to Orléans. Apparently Louis Sixteenth no longer existed, as you see; although there was still the National Assembly. As there was no longer a king, why not offer the regency to Orléans? It may be readily understood that the Duke pretended to be astonished, and refused the offer.

Nevertheless, on the First of July, Laclos, on his own private authority, proclaimed the forfeiture of the throne,

and the need of a regent. On July 3 Réal set forth the idea that the proper guardian of the young prince was Orléans. On the next day he made a demand, from the rostrum of the Jacobin Club, that the old decree, as to a regency, be reprinted and published. Unfortunately the Jacobins, although they did not yet know precisely where they stood, at least knew where they did not stand. They were not Orleanists, although both Orléans and Chartres belonged to their society. The regency of Orléans was rejected by the Jacobins.

One night sufficed for Laclos to regain his breath. If not the master of the Jacobins, he was at least master of his journal, and in that he proclaimed the regency of Orléans; and as the word *protector* had been profaned by Cromwell, the Regent, though he was to have all power, was to be called the *moderator*.

All this, as one may see, was a campaign against royalty, — a campaign wherein royalty, in itself powerless, had no other ally except the National Assembly; whereas the Jacobins constituted an assembly more influential and more dauntless than the National Assembly itself.

On July 8 — you see we are gradually coming nearer the end! — Pétion brought up the question of royal inviolability; making, however, a distinction between political inviolability and personal inviolability.

It was objected that if Louis the Sixteenth should be deposed, this action would embroil France with the kings of other nations.

“If other kings wish to fight us,” responded Pétion, “by deposing Louis Sixteenth we shall deprive them of their most powerful ally; whereas, if we leave him on the throne, we give our enemies all the force which we restore to King Louis.”

Brissot mounted the tribune in his turn, and went yet farther. He examined this question. Can the King be legally tried. "Later," he said, "in case of *deposition*, we will discuss what sort of government shall be substituted for royalty."

It is said that Brissot was superb. Madame Roland was at the session. Listen to what she wrote:

Not merely plaudits, but cries and transports were heard on all sides. Thrice the entire legislative body was constrained to rise. Arms were upraised, hats were waving in the air, and there was inexpressible enthusiasm. Perish forever those who witness and share such great outbreaks, and yet are willing to resume their chains!

It was not only decided that the King might be tried, if necessary, but the resolution was passed with great enthusiasm.

Imagine what a terrible echo these plaudits must have roused in the Tuileries!

In its turn the National Assembly could not avoid grappling with this formidable question.

The Constitutionalists, instead of shirking this debate, provoked it, feeling sure of a majority; but the majority of the Assembly was far from representing the majority of the Nation. What mattered that? Legislative bodies seldom worry themselves over such little anomalies. They enact laws, and the people upset them; and when the people defeat what the legislature has decreed, then you have a revolution.

On July 13 the public seats were filled with reliable fellows, introduced in advance by special tickets. These constituted what we should to-day call, in a theatre, the *claque*, or hired band of applauders. Outside the hall,

the corridors were filled with Royalists. For this occasion the Chevaliers du Poignard again came to the front.

By request of a member the Tuileries Gardens were closed. Perhaps on that night the Queen waited for Barnave as impatiently as she did on the evening of July 15.

Nothing was decided on that day, however; only the report was read, as prepared by a committee. In this report it was said:

The flight of the King is not a case provided for in the Constitution; but the royal inviolability is therein decreed.

That is, — the Constitution declared the King's royal person too sacred to be touched, but did not take into account the possibility of his running away.

The committee, therefore, regarding the King himself as beyond legislative jurisdiction, could only recommend the delivery to justice of the elder Bouillé, Charny, Madame de Tourzel, the young noblemen who acted as couriers, the attendants, and lackeys. Never was there a better illustration of the ingenious fable about great and little fishes. Let the net hold those who are not too strong to escape its meshes.

This question was debated far more zealously in the Jacobin Club than in the Assembly.

As it was not yet decided, Robespierre was still on the fence. He was neither a Republican nor a Monarchist. One could be as liberal under a king as with a senate.

He was a man who rarely compromised himself, this Robespierre; and yet we saw, at the end of the preceding chapter, what terrors gat hold upon him, even when he was not compromised.

There are some men, however, who have not so much precious prudence. Such men were Danton, the ex-advocate, and Legendre, the butcher,—a bulldog and a bear.

“The Assembly may absolve the King,” said Danton ; “but this judgment will be reversed by France, for France condemns him.”

“The committee-men are fools !” said Legendre. “If they knew the spirit of the masses, they would return to reason. If I speak thus, it is for the committee’s own good.”

Such speeches roused the indignation of the Constitutionalists ; but, unhappily for them, they did not form the majority among the Jacobins, as they did in the Assembly, and so they contented themselves by withdrawing from the club. They erred. It is always a mistake to quit one’s place. “The absent are always in the wrong.” There is also another old French proverb, full of good sense : “Who quits his place, loses it.”

Not only did the Constitutionalists lose their places, but their places were speedily taken by popular deputations, bearing petitions against the committee. This was what took place at the Jacobin Club, where these new members were received with acclamations.

Meantime an address, which was bound to win for itself a certain importance in the events which followed, was prepared at the other end of Paris, in the Marais (or Swamp) district, by a club—or rather by a fraternal union—of men and women, called the Society of Minims,—a name suggested perhaps by the little fishes which abounded in that locality in those days.

This society was an appendage of the Cordelier Club, being also animated by the spirit of Danton. A young man of twenty-three or twenty-four years old, upon whom

Danton had breathed his spirit, and who was animated by that breath, held the pen and prepared the address.

This young man was Jean Lambert Tallien. The address bore a formidable signature. It was signed, *The People*.

On July 14 the discussion was begun in the Assembly. This time it was impossible to keep the public out of the galleries, impossible also to fill up the corridors and avenues with Royalists and with the Chevaliers du Poignard, and impossible to close the Tuileries Gardens, — as on the former occasion.

The prologue had been acted before the *claqueurs* alone, but now the main drama must be represented before the real public; and it must be acknowledged that this public was unfavorably disposed towards royal favoritism, — so much so that Duport, so popular three months before, was heard in glum silence, when he proposed that the King's offence should bring disaster only to those who surrounded his Majesty.

However, Duport went on to the end, surprised that he could speak without rousing a single word or sign of approbation, — an unprecedented experience. He was one of a triad of stars, — Duport, Lameth, Barnave, — whose lights went out one by one, in the political firmament.

Robespierre next mounted the platform. Robespierre, the prudent man, who knew so well how to hide his tracks, what would he say? This orator, who not many days before had declared himself neither a Monarchist nor a Republican, what position would he now take? He did not distinctly state.

He said, with his sweetest acidity, that he was there to constitute himself the advocate of the highest humanity. He said that it seemed to him both unfair and cruel to

smite only the weak ; that he would not attack the King, inasmuch as the Assembly appeared to regard the King as inviolable, but he would defend Bouillé, Charny, Madame de Tourzel, the couriers, the lackeys, the attendants, and all others who had been forced to obey the King, by their dependent or subordinate positions.

The Assembly murmured during this speech. The galleries listened with great attention, not knowing whether to applaud or disapprove. At last they were able to see in the orator's words what was really there, a covert attack on royalty, and a satirical defence of courtiers and sycophants.

Then the galleries applauded Robespierre. The President tried to impose silence in the galleries.

Prieur de la Marne wished to bring the debate upon ground wholly free from subterfuges and paradoxes. He asked : " Citizens, what would you do, if the King were entirely out of the way, and somebody should come to you with the demand that he be reinstated in full power ? "

This question was the more embarrassing, because it was so direct ; but there are shameless times when nothing is embarrassing to reactionists and timeservers.

Desmeuniers replied, and appeared to sustain the cause of the Assembly, at the expense of the King. He said : " The Assembly is an all-powerful body ; and in its power it has the right to suspend the royal prerogatives, and to maintain that suspension until the Constitution is completed and established. "

That is, — as the King had not fled, but had been abducted, his power could only be suspended temporarily, because the Constitution was not yet completed ; but when once the Constitution was finished, the King might again enter, with full rights, into the exercise of his royal functions.

"Finally," said the speaker, "if anybody asks me," — though nobody *did* ask him, — "if anybody asks me to give my explanation of the proposed decree, here is the project which I suggest: *First* — This suspension of the King's authority shall endure till the King accepts the Constitution. *Second* — If he does not accept it, the Assembly shall declare him deposed."

"Oh, be easy!" exclaimed Grégoire, without leaving his seat. "Not only will he accept it, but he'll swear to anything you ask."

Desmeuniers would have been entirely right, if he had said "*swear and accept*, whatever you ask," instead of "*accept and swear*;" for kings promise much more readily than they perform.

The Assembly was about to seize this proposition on the wing; but Robespierre, without leaving his seat, threw out this word: "Be careful! Such a decree would be a decision, in advance, that the King is not to be tried."

Thus surprised in the very act of offending, the Assembly dared not vote this decree. A noise at the door of the hall also added to the embarrassment.

The noise came from a deputation of the Fraternal Society of Minimes, bearing the proclamation inspired by Danton, prepared by Tallien, and signed by *The People*.

The Assembly revenged itself on the petitioners, by refusing to hear their address.

Barnave rose and said: "Let it not be read to-day, but hear it to-morrow; and do not let us be influenced by factious opinions. Let the Law hoist its ensign and display its signal, and we shall see a rally of all good citizens."

Reader, remember this speech! Reperuse these six

words! Meditate upon that phrase: *Let the Law hoist its signal!* The phrase was uttered on July 14; but the massacre of July 17 is in that phrase.

Thus the Assembly was not content with merely tricking the people out of their mastery, which they believed they had obtained by the royal desertion, — or rather, let us say, by the treachery of the people's representative; but that Assembly must publicly surrender this mastery to Louis Sixteenth; and if the people reclaimed their rights, if they offered petitions, this only indicated a factious disposition, which would give the Assembly, that other representative of the people, an excuse for raising its flag.

What signified these words, *Raise the signal of Law?* They signified the proclamation of martial law, and the display of the red flag.

Indeed on the next day — July 15, the decisive day — the Assembly presented a formidable aspect. Nobody menaced the Assembly, but it had the air of being menaced. Lafayette was summoned to its aid; and Lafayette, — who had always come very near the people, without really knowing it, — Lafayette sent to the Assembly five thousand National Guardsmen, with whom, in order to stimulate the people, he took pains to mix a thousand pikes from the Saint Antoine district. The guns were the aristocracy of the National Guard, and the pikes represented the proletariat.

Convinced, like Barnave, that it was only needful to hoist the signal of Law, in order to bring to its support, not the people particularly, but Lafayette, as commander of the National Guard, and Bailly, the Mayor of Paris, the Assembly decided to bring matters to a crisis.

Although the Assembly had hardly been in existence two years, it already moved on like the later assemblies

of 1829 and 1846. The leaders knew they had only to weary members and auditors with secondary discussions, and postpone to the end of the session the main question, in order to carry their point. Half of the session was wasted in listening to a military report on Department Affairs. Then they listened complacently to three or four members, who had a fashion of speaking in every special debate. Then, when the limits of discussion were reached, others were silent, while two speeches were delivered, one by Salles and the other by Barnave.

These two discourses were so convincing to the Assembly that Lafayette himself moved the closure of the debate, and the vote was taken in all serenity.

On that day the Assembly had nothing to fear. To use the slang of the times, because it is most significant, they had *done* the galleries. The Tuileries Gardens were closed. The police received their orders from the President. Lafayette sat in the Assembly, to move the previous question, and so cut off further debate. Bailly was in his place as the head of the city council. Everything was ready for the final stroke. Everywhere the authorities were under arms, and prepared to control the populace.

The populace, being in no condition for a contest, passed by the long array of pikes and bayonets, and betook themselves to their modern Mount Aventine, — that is, the Champ de Mars.

Note this! They did not rush to the Champ de Mars for rebellious purposes, as the Romans of old went to their Aventine, but because they hoped there to find the Patriot Altar, which, since the day before, — July 14, the Bastille anniversary, — the government had not found time to demolish, — prompt as governments usually are to pull down such patriotic structures.

There the crowd adopted a remonstrance, and sent it to the Assembly.

While this was going on, the Assembly voted, first, a preventive measure :

If the King breaks his oath, if he attacks or refuses to defend his people, he virtually abdicates his throne, becomes a simple citizen, and is personally responsible for all offences he commits after his abdication.

Secondly, a repressive measure was adopted :

Bouillé shall be prosecuted as the chief criminal ; and all other persons who assisted in the King's abduction shall be prosecuted as secondary criminals.

At the moment when the Assembly was passing this vote, the crowd, having heard and signed their remonstrance, were returning to present it to the Assembly, which they found more strongly guarded than before. All the leaders of the Assembly were military men that day. The President of the Assembly was a young colonel, Charles Lameth. The Commander of the National Guard was Lafayette, a young general. Even our worthy astronomer, Bailly, had something the air of a warrior, amidst his bayonets and pikes, having knotted about his scientist's coat the tricolored sash, and adorned his pensive brow with the three-cornered cocked hat of the municipality. So well did he look in this guise that Madame Bailly mistook him for Lafayette, as (so they say) she had sometimes mistaken Lafayette for her husband.

The crowd talked. They felt so little hostility, that there was no reason why they should not talk. The result of their conference was, that deputies were permitted to confer with Robespierre and Pétion. You see

how the popularity of these new names waxed, in proportion as the popularity of the old names waned, — of Duport, Barnave, Lameth, Lafayette, Bailly. The delegates, six in number, started for the Assembly with a great company at their heels. Duly notified, Pétion and Robespierre hastened to the avenue of the Feuillant Terrace, to meet these delegates, and receive their message.

Too late ! The vote in the Assembly had been taken.

These two members of the Assembly, not being favorable to this vote, did not so state the matter to the popular delegates as to make them swallow it kindly ; and so these deputies returned furious to those who had sent them.

The people had lost their game, while holding the best cards fortune ever put into the popular hand.

At once the populace were enraged. They spread themselves over the city, and began by making the managers close the theatres. When the theatres are closed, as a friend says about a similar occasion in 1830, it is like a black flag over all Paris.

The Operahouse resisted, having a garrison within. Lafayette, with his four thousand muskets and thousand pikes, asked nothing better than the privilege of repressing this growing outbreak ; but the municipal authorities refused to give the proper orders.

Up to this time the Queen had kept the track of events ; but now reports were suddenly cut off, and the next intelligence was lost in a night less black than the events themselves.

Barnave, whom she awaited with so much impatience, was to come and tell her what had taken place during the day. All the world felt the approach of an impending crisis.

The King, who with the Queen had been awaiting Barnave's arrival in the second room of Madame Campan's apartments, was notified of a visit from Doctor Gilbert, and, in order to give the more attention to his reports, had gone upstairs to his own rooms, to see Gilbert, leaving Barnave to the Queen.

Towards nine a step resounded along the corridor. A voice was heard exchanging a few words with the sentinel who guarded the hallway. Then a young man appeared in the corridor, clad as a lieutenant in the National Guards.

It was Barnave. The Queen, her heart palpitating as if that man were a cherished lover, unfastened the door; and Barnave, after looking carefully before and behind him, glided through the open flap of it.

The door was instantly shut, and before a word was spoken, the grating of the bolt could be heard in its socket.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF JULY.

THE hearts of both were beating with equal violence, but under the impulse of very opposite sentiments. The Queen's heart was beating with hopes of vengeance; Barnave's heart was aflame with the desire for her love.

The Queen passed quickly into the inner room, — seeking for light, so to speak. She certainly did not fear either Barnave or his passion, for she well knew his love to be respectful and devoted; but with feminine instinct she fled from the darkness.

On entering this room she at once sat down. Barnave paused on the threshold, and surveyed the whole circumference of the little parlor, lighted only by two candles. He expected to find the King there; for the King had assisted at Barnave's two previous interviews with Marie Antoinette; but there was no third person present. For the first time since their promenade in the picture-gallery of the Archbishop's residence at Meaux, Barnave found himself *tête-à-tête* with the Queen. His hand involuntarily sought his heart, to suppress its beatings.

"Oh, Monsieur Barnave," said the Queen, after a moment of silence, "I have been expecting you for two hours."

At this reproach, made in a voice so soft that it ceased to be accusatory and became plaintive, Barnave's first impulse was to throw himself at the Queen's feet; but

respect forbade this demonstration. The heart sometimes tells us that to fall on our knees at a woman's feet is to fail in proper respect.

"Alas, Madame, it is true," he said; "but I hope your Majesty is convinced that my tardiness is not in my will."

"Oh, yes!" said she, with a slight affirmative nod of the head. "I know your devotion to the monarchy."

"Above all, I am devoted to the Queen," said Barnave. "I wish your Majesty might be persuaded of that!"

"I doubt it not, Monsieur Barnave.—So you could not get here sooner?"

"I attempted to do so at seven o'clock, Madame; but it was too near the broad daylight, and I met—how dares such a man approach your palace?—I met Marat on the terrace."

"Marat?" said the Queen, as if trying to place the name in her memory. "Isn't he a newspaper man, who writes against us?"

"Who scribbles against all the world!—Yes. His viperous eye followed me till I disappeared through the grating of the Feuillant Terrace. I passed along, without even a glance at your windows. Happily, on the Pont-Royal, whom should I meet but Saint-Prix."

"Saint-Prix? Who is he,—an actor?" said the Queen, with almost as much scorn as she had just shown towards Marat.

"Yes, Madame, an actor!" replied Barnave; "but why not? This is one of the characteristics of our epoch. Actors and journalists,—fellows of whose very existence kings were formerly ignorant, save when their lordships gave orders which the poor fellows were only too glad to obey,—journalists and actors have become

citizens, having their share of influence, exercising wills of their own, acting according to their own inspiration, with power for good or ill, — important parts of the great social machine, wherein royalty is now but the superior wheel. — Saint-Prix took Marat's bad taste out of my mouth."

"How so?"

"Saint-Prix was in uniform. Knowing him very well, Madame, I spoke to him, and asked him where he was to be on guard. Fortunately he was to be here, in the palace. I knew I could trust his discretion; so I told him I was to have the honor of an audience with you."

"Oh, Monsieur Barnave!"

"Was it better to renounce the honor —" Barnave nearly said *happiness*, but he checked himself, and said *honor* — "of seeing you, and so leave you in ignorance of the important intelligence which I have to make known?"

"No, you did right, — if you think you can trust Saint-Prix."

"Madame, this is a critical moment," said Barnave, gravely, "as you may well believe. Those who remain faithful to you now are indeed true friends; for if to-morrow — and this point will be decided to-morrow — the Jacobins prevail over the Constitutionalists, your friends will be regarded as your accomplices. As you see, the legislative decrees only free you from punishment in order to strike your friends, who are called your accomplices."

"True!" replied the Queen; "but you were saying that Monsieur Saint-Prix —?"

"Saint-Prix told me that he should be on guard at the Tuileries from nine till eleven, that he would endeavor to get a post here on the *entre-sol*, and thus your Majesty would have full two hours in which to give me

your orders. Only he counselled me to wear my uniform as an officer in the National Guard ; and I have followed his advice, as your Majesty sees."

"And you found Saint-Prix at his post?"

"Yes, Madame. — It cost him two theatre tickets to get this appointment from his sergeant. You see how easy a thing is corruption!" added Barnave, smiling.

"Marat — Saint-Prix — two theatre tickets!" repeated the Queen, glancing with a startled look into the abyss, wherefrom emerge those petty spindles which weave the destinies of kings in times of revolution.

"Oh, my God, yes!" said Barnave. "Strange, is it not, Madame? This is what the ancients called Fate, what philosophers call Chance, what believers call Providence."

The Queen drew a lock of her long hair over her beautiful neck, and looked at it sadly. At last she said : "That is what whitens my hair!"

Returning to Barnave, and the political side of the situation, — for a moment forgotten in contemplating the mysterious and picturesque side, — she said : "I think I have heard it said that we have won a victory in the Assembly."

"Yes, Madame, we have gained a victory in the Assembly ; but we have suffered a defeat at the Jacobin Club."

"But I can't understand all this. — I thought the Jacobins were on your side, with Lameth and Duport, — that you held the Jacobins in your hand, and could do with them what you chose."

Barnave shook his head sorrowfully as he said : "It was so formerly ; but a new spirit has come over the Jacobins."

"Orléans, — is it not?" asked the Queen.

"Yes, at present the peril comes from that quarter."

"The peril? I ask again, are we not put out of danger by to-day's vote?"

"It is best to understand the difficulty well, in order to face the situation. The vote of to-day was to this purport, — that if the King forfeited his oath, if he attacked or did not defend his people, he practically abdicated his throne, and so became a plain citizen, and accountable for any offences which he might commit subsequent to his abdication."

"Well," said the Queen, "the King will not go back on his oath; he will not attack his own subjects; and if they are attacked, the King will defend them."

"Yes, Madame! but by this vote a door is left open for extreme Revolutionists and Orleanists. The Assembly has not yet decided about the King. Some preventive measures have been voted, in case of a second desertion; but the first flight has been left out of the question. Do you know what was proposed at the Jacobin Club this evening, by Laclos, Orléans's tool?"

"Something terrible, no doubt. What wholesome measure could be proposed by the author of such a vulgar story as his?"

"He demanded that a petition should be circulated in Paris, and all over France, to compel the King's resignation. He would be answerable for at least ten million signatures."

"Ten million signatures!" cried the Queen. "My God! Are we so much hated, that ten millions of people wish to push us from the throne?"

"Oh, Madame! majorities are easily obtainable."

"And Laclos's motion was passed?"

"It raised a discussion. — Danton sustained it."

"Danton? Why, I thought Danton was with us."

Montmorin talked to me about some office, connected with the Crown Council, — either bought or sold, I forget which, — which secured the aid of this man for our side.”

“Monsieur de Montmorin was mistaken, Madame. If Danton belongs to anybody, it is to Orléans.”

“And did Robespierre speak? They say he is beginning to have great influence.”

“Yes, Robespierre spoke. He did not sustain the Laclos petition, but simply advocated some address to the Jacobin societies scattered through the provinces.”

“But it is necessary to have Robespierre, if he has acquired such importance.”

“Nobody owns Robespierre, Madame. He stands by himself, — for an ideal, for a phantom, for Utopia, — for an ambition, perhaps.”

“Well, as for his ambition, whatever it may be, we can gratify it. — Suppose he wishes for wealth —?”

“He does not care to be rich.”

“To be a cabinet-minister, then —?”

“Perhaps he wishes to be more than a cabinet-minister.”

The Queen looked at Barnave almost in dread. Presently she said: “It seems to me that the royal ministry is the most elevated station to which one of our subjects may aspire.”

“If Robespierre considers the King dethroned, he no longer regards himself as one of the King’s subjects.”

“To what then does his ambition point?” asked the amazed Queen.

“There are certain times, Madame, when men dream of new titles in politics, in place of old titles, which are effaced.”

“Yes, I can understand that Orléans might dream of being Regent, for his birth entitles him to such high

functions ; but Robespierre, a pettifogger from the provinces — ! ”

She forgot that Barnave also was an attorney from the provinces. Barnave remained motionless, either because the blow glided over him without touching his sensibility, or else because he had the courage to take the blow and make no sign.

“Marius and Cromwell rose from the ranks of the people,” he said.

“Marius ? Cromwell ? — Alas, when I heard those names in my childhood, I little thought that one day they would return to my ear with so fatal a sound ! But we are all this time drifting away from the facts which demand our present appreciation. — Robespierre, you tell me, was opposed to the Laclos proposal, supported by Danton.”

“Yes ! but at that moment a flood of people came into the meeting, ordinary kickers from the Palais Royal, — a band of snarling women, brought in to support Laclos ; and not only was his resolution passed, but it was decided that to-morrow forenoon, at eleven o’clock, the Jacobins would come together to hear the resolution read, which is then to be carried to the Champ de Mars, and there laid on the Patriot Altar, for the reception of signatures, and sent to all the societies in the provinces, for more signatures.”

“And this petition, who is to prepare it ? ”

“Danton, Laclos, and Brissot.”

“Three enemies ? ”

“Yes, Madame ! ”

“But — my God ! — what are our friends, the Constitutionalists, doing about it ? ”

“Ah, there it is ! Well, Madame, they have decided that to-morrow they will win or lose all.”

"But the Constitutionalists cannot remain with the Jacobins, surely?"

"Your admirable penetration in regard to men and things enables you to see the situation precisely as it is. — Yes, led by Duport and Lameth, your friends at once separated themselves from your enemies. They set up the Feuillants in opposition to the Jacobins."

"What is meant by the Feuillants? Excuse me! for really, I know next to nothing. There are so many new names and new things in our political language, that every other word rouses a question in my mind."

"Madame, the old Feuillant Convent is a large building near the Riding School, — almost leaning against the Assembly Hall; and this convent gives its name, as you know, to a terrace belonging to the Tuileries."

"And who will belong to this new club?"

"Lafayette, — that is, the National Guard, — and Bailly, — that is to say, the municipality."

"Lafayette? You think you can count on Lafayette?"

"I believe he is sincerely devoted to the King."

"Devoted to the King? — Yes, as a woodchopper is devoted to the oak, which he means to fell to its very roots! Bailly? — Well, I have no cause of complaint against him. I might say even more; for when that woman, Rochereul, guessed at our departure, he sent her denunciation to me! — But Lafayette —?"

"Your Majesty may have had occasion to test him."

"Yes, that's true!" said the Queen, with a mournful retrospect in her thoughts. "At Versailles! — Well, this new club, — let us hear more about it. What will the Feuillants do? What do they propose to do? What strength have they?"

"They have enormous strength, because, as I told your Majesty just now, they have at their disposal the National

Guards, the city authorities, and the majority of the National Assembly, who voted with us. Who are left with the Jacobins? Perhaps five or six Deputies, — Robespierre, Pétion, Laclos, Orléans, — heterogeneous elements, which can only stir up the herd of new members and the outsiders, — a band of snarlers, who make lots of noise, but have no influence.”

“God grant it! But what does the Assembly mean to do?”

“The Assembly means to sharply admonish the Mayor of Paris on his leniency and hesitation to-day. The result will be that Goodman Bailly will go on straight; for he belongs to the *clock* family, and only needs to be wound up, and properly set, to run on time.”

At that instant a clock was heard striking the quarter before eleven, and they also heard the warning cough of the sentinel.

“Yes, yes,” murmured Barnave, “I know! it’s time for me to retire; and yet it seems as if I had a thousand things to say to your Majesty.”

“And I, Monsieur Barnave,” said the Queen, “I can only make you one response, — that I am grateful to you, — to you and your friends, — on account of the dangers to which you have been exposed on my account.”

“Madame,” said Barnave, “this risk is a game in which I have everything to gain, whether I conquer or am conquered, — if, whatever the result, the Queen will repay me with a smile.”

“Alas, Monsieur, I hardly know what a smile is like! but you are doing so much for us, that I will try to recall the time when I was happy, and I promise that my first smile shall be yours.”

Barnave bowed and retired backward, with his hand on his heart.

“Monsieur,” said the Queen, “when shall I see you again?”

Barnave began to calculate. “To-morrow there will be the petition, and the second vote in the Assembly. The next day will come the explosion, and the provisional repression. — On Sunday evening, Madame, I will try to come and tell you what has taken place in the Champ de Mars!” and then he went out.

Pensively the Queen went upstairs to her husband, whom she found equally thoughtful. Doctor Gilbert had just left him, and had told him much the same things which Barnave had told the Queen. The royal couple had only to exchange glances to know that on both sides the outlook was equally gloomy.

The King had just written a letter. Without a word he presented it to the Queen for her perusal.

This paper gave to *Monsieur* the power to solicit, in the name of the King of France, the intervention of the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia.

“*Monsieur* has done me much harm,” said the Queen. “*Monsieur* still hates me, and will do me all the mischief he can; but if he has the King’s confidence, he shall have mine also!”

Taking the quill, she heroically wrote her signature beside the King’s.

CHAPTER XVII.

WHEREIN WE AT LAST REACH THAT PROTEST WHICH MADAME
ROLAND WAS COPYING.

WE trust the conversation of the Queen with Barnave has given our readers an accurate idea of the attitude of all parties on July 15, 1791.

The New Jacobins had pushed their way into the place of the old.

The Old Jacobins had formed a new club, called the *Feuillant*.

The *Cordeliers*, represented by Danton, Camille Desmoulins, and Legendre, had united with the New Jacobins.

The Assembly, being filled with Royalists and Constitutionalists, had decided to maintain the King, at any price.

The people were resolved to have the King deposed by any feasible means, but they were willing first to employ protest and petition.

Meantime, what happened during the night and day intervening between Barnave's interview with the Queen, under the kind protection of the actor, Saint-Prix, and the moment when we at last return to Madame Roland's apartments, — that is, during the night of July 15 and the day following?

This we will relate in a few words.

While this conversation was going on between Barnave and Marie Antoinette, three men were seated around a

table, with paper, quills, and ink in front of them, — three men appointed by the Jacobins to prepare the petition. These three men were Danton, Laclos, and Brissot.

Danton was not the man for this kind of work. All his life, made up of action and pleasure, he always waited impatiently for the end of every committee-meeting in which he took part.

After a few moments he took himself away, leaving Brissot and Laclos to arrange the petition as they chose.

Laclos saw him go out, and followed him with his eyes till Danton disappeared, and with his ears till he heard the door shut.

This double action of the senses appeared to draw Laclos momentarily from that make-believe sleepiness under which he disguised his indefatigable activity. Then he buried himself again in his armchair, and let the quill fall from his hand, saying, as he did so: "Faith, my dear Brissot, draw this up as you think best. As for me, — well, I decline! — Ah! if it was only a bad book, as they say at Court, — a successor of my '*Liaisons Dangereuses*,' — I might undertake it; but a petition! — a petition makes me tired!" he added, yawning as if he would dislocate his jaw.

On the contrary, Brissot was just the man for this sort of composition. Convinced that he could draft it better than anybody else, he accepted the duty thus devolving upon him, through Danton's absence and the request of Laclos. The latter closed his eyes, and settled himself more comfortably into his armchair, as if he felt like taking a nap; while really he was prepared to weigh each phrase, each letter, in order to insert a loophole for the regency of his Prince, if he saw any possible chance for it.

As fast as Brissot wrote a phrase he read it aloud, and Laclos approved it by a slight nod of his head, and a muffled grunt of assent.

In outlining the situation Brissot enumerated the following points :

First. The hypocritical or timid silence of the Assembly, which either did not dare or did not wish to enact anything relating to the King.

Second. The virtual abdication of Louis the Sixteenth, by his flight, when the Assembly voted his suspension from office, and caused him to be pursued and arrested. As acknowledged kings are never suspended, arrested, or pursued, if Louis the Sixteenth was suspended, pursued, and arrested, this shows that he is no longer King.

Third. The necessity of providing for his replacement.

“Good, good!” said Laclos, when he heard this last word. Then the Duke’s secretary continued, as Brissot was about writing something else : “Hold on ! It seems to me that after those three words, *for his replacement*, something ought to be added, — something which will rally timid souls to our side. All men haven’t burned their ships behind them, as we have.”

“Perhaps so,” said Brissot. “What shall it be ?”

“Oh, it’s for you, rather than me, to decide that, my dear Brissot. — I should add — let me see — ”

Laclos pretended to search for a phrase, which really had been long formulated in his brain, and was only waiting for the right time, in order to pop out.

“Well,” he said at last, “after the words *provide for his replacement*, I would add, *by all Constitutional means.*”

Observe and admire, oh ye politicians, ye past, present, and future framers of petitions, protests, and law-drafts !

It was a very little thing, the addition of these few inoffensive words, was it not?

Well, you shall see — that is, if those of my readers who are so happy as not to be politicians wish to see — whither these four words, *by all Constitutional means*, might lead.

All Constitutional means for providing a substitute for the King would reduce the problem to a single word. That single word was *regency*.

In the absence of both *Monsieur* and Artois, the two brothers of Louis the Sixteenth and uncles of the Dauphin, — depopularized by their emigration from France, — who would succeed to the regency? Orléans!

This innocent little phrase, slipped into a petition drawn up in the name of the people, would really make the people ask, or appear to ask, that Orléans should be appointed Regent, during the minority of the Dauphin, who was as yet only five or six years old.

This Orléans, whom we have met at the Lodge of Enlightened Ones, and elsewhere, — who, for a season, had been exiled to England by Lafayette, — was a distant cousin of Louis Sixteenth, his great-great-grandfather having been the only brother of Louis the Fourteenth, who was the great-great-great-grandfather of Louis the Sixteenth. There were no direct male descendants of either Louis Fourteenth or Louis Fifteenth, except Louis Sixteenth, his brothers Provence and Artois, and his little son, the Dauphin. If Louis Sixteenth were deposed, and his brothers were out of the country and unpopular, then the nearest legitimate relative of the Dauphin on the spot (the illegitimate uncle, Narbonne, being of course left out of the question) would be Orléans, a cousin several times removed.

All this the astute Laclos had in mind. As being the

nearest resident relative, Orleans alone would have a Constitutional right to the regency, and this is what Laclos hoped for his ducal patron.

A beautiful institution, this politics, is it not? Only it takes time to see things clearly, when managed by men of such force as Monsieur de Laclos.

To this addition to his phrase Brissot raised no objection: perhaps because he did not discover the mine hidden in those five words, ready to explode at the proper time; perhaps because he did not see the serpent in the grass of that addition, whose hissing crest would be reared at the crucial moment; perhaps because, knowing the risk he would run as the writer of this petition, he was not sorry to provide a loophole of escape. So Brissot said to his colleague: "Indeed, that will rally some Constitutionalists to our support. The idea is a good one, Monsieur de Laclos."

The rest of the petition was in accord with the sentiments it was meant to convey.

The next day, July 16, Pétion, Brissot, Danton, Camille Desmoulins, and Laclos went to the Jacobin Club, and carried the petition. The hall was empty, or nearly so.

Everybody had gone to the Feuillant Club. Barnave was not mistaken. The desertion was complete.

Pétion forthwith hurried to the Feuillant Club. What did he find there? Barnave, Duport, and Lameth, preparing a circular address to the provincial Jacobin societies, announcing to them that the Jacobin Club no longer existed, but had been transformed into the Feuillant Club, under the title, — Association of Friends of the Constitution.

Thus the Jacobin society, which had cost so much pains to establish, and which spread like a network over all France, ceased to be a moving power, paralyzed by

hesitation. Who was to be obeyed, who was to be trusted, — the Old Jacobins or the New?

Meantime an Anti-Revolutionary stratagem was preparing; and the people, who no longer had any proper representation, — sleeping, as they did, on their faith in their chosen watchmen, — would awake to find themselves pinioned and garrotted.

The storm must be met. Everybody must draw up a statement for himself, and send it to the province where he thought it would do the most good.

As the special Deputy from Lyons, Roland had great influence in the second capital of the kingdom. Before going to the Champ de Mars, where — in default of the Jacobins, who were not to be found there — Danton was to have the petition signed by the populace, he went to Roland's lodgings, explained the situation to him and his wife, and persuaded them to send, without delay, a protest to the Lyons people, — a protest which Roland himself was to prepare for that purpose. It was hoped that the Lyonese would join hands with the people of Paris, and make a similar and simultaneous protest.

This was the document, drawn up by her husband, which Madame Roland was copying.

As to Danton, he went to rejoin his friends in the Champ de Mars. When he arrived a great debate was going on.

In the middle of the vast arena was the Patriot Altar. It had been erected for the Festival of July 14, two days before, — the second anniversary of the taking of the Bastille, — and still remained there, a skeleton of the past.

This altar was like the one built for the Federation of 1790, the year before. It was a large platform, with stairs on four sides, corresponding to the four cardinal

points of the compass. Over this altar was a picture, representing the glorification of Voltaire, which had been celebrated July 12, only four days before. Over the picture was the placard of the Cordeliers, cited in a previous chapter, and containing the oath of Brutus, written by Voltaire.

The discussion, in progress when Danton appeared, concerned the five words introduced into the petition by Laclos. They were being passed by without notice, when a man, who appeared by his dress and manners to belong to the plebeian classes, brusquely interrupted the reader, with a freedom amounting to violence.

"Stop!" he said. "The people are being deceived!"

"How so?" asked the reader.

"By those words, *by all Constitutional means*. You would replace *King* with *Regent*. You would restore royalty, and we've had enough of it already."

"No more kings! No more royalty!" shouted most of the listeners.

What a singular thing! Here were the Old Jacobins apparently taking part with royalty! This is what they said: "Be on your guard, gentlemen! That cry, *no more kings, no more royalty*, means the beginning of a republic; and we are not ripe for a republic."

"No, we are not ripe!" said the man of the people. "That's so! But give us one or two more sunny weeks like Varennes, and we'll ripen fast enough."

"Acclamation! Let us vote a petition by acclamation!"

So shouted one voice; and the cry was cordially taken up by those who had already shouted: "No more royalty! No more kings!"

It was necessary to appeal to a hand vote, without a ballot. The unknown man put the question: "Let

those who will no longer recognize Louis Sixteenth, or any other king, raise their hands."

Such a powerful majority raised their hands that there was no need even to call for the negative vote.

"That is well," said the speaker. "To-morrow, Sunday, July 17, all Paris will be here to sign this resolution. I, Billot, will see that due notice is given."

By the utterance of this name, Billot, everybody recognized the formidable farmer who, accompanied by Lafayette's aide, had arrested the King at Varennes, and haled him back to Paris.

Thus, at one step, the boldest of the Cordeliers and the Jacobins were outstripped; and by whom? By a man of the people, — that is, by the instinct of the masses. As Camille Desmoulins, Danton, Brissot, and Pétion declared that, in their opinion, such an act could not be accomplished by the Parisian populace without raising a storm, it was deemed important to at once obtain permission, from the Hôtel de Ville, for the gathering appointed by Billot for the next day.

"So be it!" said Billot. "Get it! and if you can't get it peaceably, I'll exact it."

Desmoulins and Brissot were deputed to attend to this matter.

Bailly was absent, but they found the Mayor's First Assistant. He would not take it upon himself, either to refuse or give the authorization, but contented himself with a verbal endorsement of the petition; so Brissot and Desmoulins quitted the Hôtel de Ville, feeling that this was sufficient license for their purpose.

Upon their heels, the First Syndic sent a messenger to warn the National Assembly of the march thus to be stolen upon them, under their very eaves.

The Assembly was thus caught in its own trap. The

Assembly had as yet voted nothing in relation to the present status of the fugitive Louis, who had been deprived of his royal titles, overtaken at Varennes, and brought back to the Tuileries, where he had been held as a prisoner since June 26.

No time was to be lost. Desmeuniers, with all the appearance of an enemy of the royal family, presented the draft of a decree, conceived in the following terms :

The suspension of the Executive Power shall continue until the Constitution is presented to the King and accepted by him.

This decree, proposed at seven o'clock, in the evening of July 16, was adopted at eight, by an immense majority.

This would of course render the popular petition inoperative ; as, by the Assembly's vote, the King, suspended only till he accepted the Constitution, would become, by that simple act of acceptance, just as much of a king as he ever was before. Whoever demanded the removal of a king Constitutionally maintained by the Assembly, as long as the King showed himself disposed to accede to the legal conditions, would of course be in open rebellion ; and as the situation was grave, such rebels must be pursued with all the means which the law placed at the disposition of its agents.

That evening there was a meeting of the Mayor and Municipal Council, at the Hôtel de Ville. The session began at half-past nine. By ten it had been decided that on the next day, Sunday, July 17, by eight in the morning, the Assembly's decree should be printed, and affixed to all the walls of the city ; and that it should also be proclaimed, in all the crossroads of Paris, with

sound of trumpet, by the official criers of the city, under an armed escort.

An hour after this decision was reached, it was known to the Old Jacobins. They felt very weak. The desertion of the greater part of their numbers to the Feuillants had left the Jacobins isolated and without strength. They yielded.

Santerre, the man from the Faubourg Saint Antoine, the popular brewer of the Bastille neighborhood, — who was eventually to succeed Lafayette in his office, — took upon himself, in the name of the Jacobins, to go to the Champ de Mars, and withdraw the petition already started by them, and prepared by Brissot and Laclos.

The Cordeliers showed themselves more prudent. Danton declared that he must pass the next day at Fontenay-sous-Bois, where his father-in-law, the lemonade-seller, had a little country-house. Legendre promised to join him there, with Desmoulins and Fréron.

The Rolands received a little billet, warning them that it would be useless to send their protest to Lyons. Everything had either failed or been postponed.

It was nearly midnight, and Madame Roland had just finished her copy of the protest, when this little note came from Danton, which it was quite impossible to comprehend.

Just about this time two men, who were taking their third bottle of fifteen-sou wine at a table in the back room of a wineshop in Gros Caillou, hit upon a strange project.

One of these men was a barber, and the other a military pensioner.

“Ah, what droll notions you have, Lajariette,” said the invalid pensioner, with a vulgarly stupid laugh.

"Here's the idea, Father Rémy," replied the barber. "You see it, don't you? Before daylight we'll go to the Champ de Mars. We'll rip up a plank from the Patriot Altar, slip underneath it, and replace the plank. Then with a big gimlet, an auger, we'll bore holes in the plank. A crowd of young and pretty citizenesses will go upon that platform to-morrow, to sign that petition, — and, on my word, through the holes —"

The obscene and vacant laugh of the pensioner redoubled. Evidently he was already gazing, in imagination, through the holes in the altar platform.

The barber did not laugh so heartily. The honorable and aristocratic corporation to which he belonged found its business ruined by the plebeian turn of the tide. The emigration had been a loss to artistic hairdressers; and from what we have seen of the Queen's coiffures, we know that elaborate hairdressing was an art at that epoch. As we were saying, the aristocratic emigration had deprived these artists of their best trade. Moreover, Talma had acted the part of Titus, in Racine's "Bérénice," and his way of dressing his hair had given birth to a new fashion, which consisted of wearing the hair short and without powder.

In general, therefore, barbers were Royalists. Read Prudhomme, and you will see that a hairdresser cut his throat in despair, on the day of the King's execution.

So these two men thought it would be a good trick to play on those silly *Patriotesses* (as they were called by the grand ladies who still stayed in France) to peep under their petticoats; and Master Lajariette counted on certain prospective erotic souvenirs, wherewith to enliven his morning gossip for a month to come.

The notion of such a lark had come to him while drinking with his jocose old friend, who, when it was

suggested to him, felt a tingle through his nerves, — even through the old leg he had left on the field at the battle of Fontenoy, and which the state had generously replaced with a wooden limb.

As a result of their deliberations the two boon companions called for a fourth bottle of wine, which the landlord speedily supplied. They were about opening it, when the old pensioner broached an idea of his own. This was to get a little keg, to empty the wine into the keg (instead of into their glasses) along with two other bottles, to momentarily restrain their thirst, and then to carry the keg with them to the field of action.

The pensioner backed up his proposition with the axiom that it is very warm work, gazing up into the air.

The barber condescended to smile; and as the publican now suggested to the guests that it was useless for them to remain in his shop if they did not wish to drink any more, our two foxes bargained with him for a keg and an auger, pocketed the auger, and put the three bottles of wine into the keg. When midnight sounded, under cover of the darkness, they directed their steps towards the Champ de Mars, and pried up the plank. Then they couched themselves softly on the dirt under the platform, with the keg between them, and soon fell asleep.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PETITION.

THERE are certain times when the people, after a cumulative series of excitements, rise like the sea, wave on wave, and need a grand cataclysm, which shall compel a return to their normal boundaries, as the ocean sinks back into the bed provided for it by bountiful nature. So was it with the Parisian populace during that fortnight of July, when so many events brought them to the boiling point.

On Sunday, July 10, there was to have been a procession in honor of Voltaire ; but the bad weather prevented the festival from being carried out as projected, and the procession only went as far as the Charenton Barrier, where the crowd stayed all day.

On Monday, July 11, the weather was clear. The escort again put itself in motion, and traversed Paris, amidst an immense concourse of people, halting before the house where the author of the "Philosophical Dictionary" and "La Pucelle" had died, in order to enable his adopted daughter, Madame Villette, and the Calas family to put flowers on the casket, which was also honored with a chorus by artists from the opera.

On Wednesday, July 13, there was a great celebration at the church of Notre Dame, and a composition called "The Taking of the Bastille" was performed by a large orchestra.

Thursday, July 14, was the first anniversary of the Great Federation of 1790, and there was a pilgrimage to the Patriot Altar. Three-fourths of the population of Paris were in the Champ de Mars, and their heads were almost turned with Hurrahs for the Nation, and the sight of the universal illumination, in the midst whereof the Tuileries Palace seemed like a tomb, gloomy and mute.

On Friday, July 15, the reactionary vote was taken in the Assembly, protected by Lafayette's four thousand bayonets and thousand pikes.

The proposed petition was also prepared for the crowd. The theatres were closed ; and there were rumors and disturbances during the entire evening and a part of the night.

Finally, on Saturday, July 16, there occurred the desertion of the Jacobins to the Feuillant Club. Violent scenes took place on the Pont-Neuf, where the police belabored Fréron, and arrested an Englishman and an Italian teacher named Rotondo. On that day came also the outbreak in the Champ de Mars, when Billot exposed the mischievous phrase slipped into the petition by Laclos. A popular vote demanded the forfeiture of his throne by Louis Sixteenth ; and an arrangement was made for receiving signatures to a petition on the day following.

The night of July 16 is agitated, dark, and full of tumult. The ringleaders of the Old Jacobins and the Cordeliers keep out of sight, having some hints as to the plans of their adversaries ; but conscientious and innocent men of this progressive party agree to reunite, whatever may happen, and carry on the enterprise already begun.

Others are on the watch, with sentiments less honest

and less philanthropic. These are the hateful men, swarming around every great social commotion, who love riots, tumults, and the scent of blood ; as vultures and tigers love armies which destroy one another, and so keep up the supply of corpses.

There is Marat, in his subterranean lair, alone with his mania, — Marat, who always believes himself the object of threats and persecutions, or pretends so to believe. He lives in the shadows, like beasts of prey and birds of night. Out of those shadows, as from the caves of Trophonius or Delphi, come every morning those sinister oracles which are spread over the pages of Marat's journal, called "The People's Friend."

For several days this journal has been tinted with blood. Since the King's return it has proposed, as the only safeguard of the rights and interests of the people, an absolute dictatorship and a general massacre. According to Marat's dictum, it is necessary to annihilate the Assembly and hang the authorities.

Then, by way of variety in the proceedings, as throat-cutting and hanging are not sufficient, he proposes to saw off hands, to cut off thumbs, to bury people alive, or impale them on knives. It is high time for Marat's physician to come to his employer's relief, according to his custom, and say: "Your writing is red with blood, Marat. I must let a little of it out of you with my lancet."

You remember Verrière, that abominable hunchback, that formidable dwarf, with his long arms and long legs, whom we saw at the very beginning of this narration, at work on October 5 and 6, 1789, and who thereafter retreated into his obscurity? Well, on July 16, 1790, he reappears, and is seen like a vision of the Apocalypse, — as Michelet expresses it, — mounted on Death's white

horse, down whose sides dangle his long legs, his huge feet, and his big knees. Like a harpy of misfortune, he pauses at each street corner, at each crossroad, and warns the populace to be on hand the next day, at the Champ de Mars.

Fournier, who enters our story for the first time, and whom they call Fournier the American, — not because he was born in America, for he comes from Auvergne, but because he has been a slave-driver in Saint Domingo, — Fournier is on hand. Ruined and soured by unsuccessful lawsuits, he is exasperated by the apathy with which the National Assembly has treated the twenty successive petitions he has sent to it. It is very easily explained, his ill-success ; so he thinks. The wirepullers of the Assembly are planters, like the Lameths, or the friends of planters, like Barnave and Duport. Fournier is bound to be revenged on the first occasion ; and he keeps his word, — this man with the traits of a brute in his intellect, and the grin of a hyena on his face.

Now then, we have before us the situation during the night of July 16.

The King and Queen are anxiously waiting at the Tuileries. Barnave has promised them a victory over the people. He does not say what the triumph will be, or how it is to be brought about. What matters it to them ? They do not regard the means, if the efforts are for their advantage. Only, the King desires this triumph because it will ameliorate the condition of royalty ; whereas the Queen sees in it the beginning of vengeance ; and, in her mind, it is quite permissible to be avenged on those who have made royalty suffer so much.

The Assembly, depending upon one of the apparent majorities which satisfy such bodies, waits somewhat tranquilly. Its measures are taken. Whatever happens, the

law is on its side. If the game proves a losing one, and there is need of it, the Assembly can conjure with that supreme phrase, *the public safety*.

Lafayette waits without fear. He has his National Guards, as yet devoted to him; and among these guards is a corps of nine thousand men, composed of old soldiers, Gardes Françaises, and enrolled volunteers. This corps belongs rather to the army than the city. It is under pay, moreover, which the National Guards, as a rule, are not. It is therefore nicknamed the Hireling Guard. If there is to be any terrible work to-morrow, this is the body to execute it.

Bailly and the other municipal officers are also in anxious expectation. After a life spent entirely in his study and in scientific inquiry, Bailly finds himself suddenly pushed forward into politics and public assemblies. Admonished yesterday, by the Assembly, for his weakness on the evening of July 15, he sleeps to-night with his head pillowed upon a treatise on martial law, which the next day he can rigorously enforce, if any necessity for it arrives.

The Old Jacobins are also in anxious expectation, but their demoralization is complete. Robespierre is in hiding. Laclos sulks, having seen his interpolated phrase detected and ousted. Pétion, Buzot, and Brissot are all prepared for some escape, in case to-morrow proves a hard day. Santerre, who is to go to the Champ de Mars at eleven in the morning, to withdraw the Danton-and-Brissot petition, may carry some news with him.

The Cordeliers have given up the struggle. Danton, as we have said, is at Fontenay, with his wife's father. Legendre, Fréron, and Camille Desmoulins are to rejoin him there. The other Cordeliers can do nothing without a head.

Ignorant of all this, the populace will go to the Champ de Mars to sign the petition. They will shout for the Nation. They will dance around the Patriot Altar, and sing the famous *Ça ira* of 1790.

Between 1790 and 1791 the reaction has dug a great pit. This pit must be filled with the dead bodies of the Seventeenth of July.

Whatever is to happen, the day dawns magnificently. By four o'clock all the pedlers, who live by small industries and dwell in beehives, those Bohemians who burrow in all great cities, — sellers of chocolate, gingerbread, cakes, and sweetmeats, — begin to wend their way towards the Patriot Altar, which stands solitary, in the middle of the Champ de Mars, like a grand and lonesome catafalque.

A painter, standing twenty paces from the riverside, is making a careful sketch of this altar.

At half-past four perhaps a hundred and fifty persons may be counted on the Champ de Mars.

Those who rise with the sun are generally those who sleep poorly; and, for the most part, those who sleep poorly (I speak of ordinary men and women) are those who sup poorly, or not at all.

When one has no supper and little sleep, he is apt to be in bad humor at four in the morning. There are, therefore, among those one hundred and fifty early risers now gathered about the Patriot Altar, some fellows ill-favored and in bad humor.

Suddenly a woman, a lemonade-seller, standing on the steps of the altar, screams. The point of an auger has pierced her shoe. She calls for help, and everybody runs to her. The plank is bored with holes, for which nobody can see any cause or reason; but the presence of that auger, whose point penetrated the lemonade-vender's

shoe, indicates the presence of one or more men beneath the platform, whereon the altar stands.

What are they doing there? They are spoken to. They are summoned to respond, to state their intentions, to come out, to show themselves. No response.

The sketcher, above referred to, leaves his stool, drops his canvas, and runs to Gros Caillou for the guard. The guard cannot see, in a woman's being pricked in the foot, any sufficient reason for disturbing himself, refuses to do anything about it, and sends the painter away dissatisfied. When he returns, the general exasperation overflows. All crowd about the Patriot Altar,—some three hundred persons. They lift the plank and look into the cavity beneath.

There they find two very shame-faced men,—our barber and our old pensioner. The barber, who feels that the auger may be a proof of his guilt, throws it away as far as he can, but he forgets about the wine-keg. They are taken by their collars, forced to come out upon the platform, and interrogated as to their intentions. As they hesitate, they are dragged before a police inspector.

Again questioned they acknowledge why they were hiding under the platform. The commissioner regards this as an unimportant and harmless joke, and liberates the two men; but at the gate they are met by the laundresses from Gros Caillou, with their beetles in their hands, which they use for beating the garments that they wash in the river, whither they are perhaps bound at that early hour.

The laundresses of Gros Caillou, it appears, are very ticklish in regard to female honor; so these irritated Dianas fall, with great blows of their beetles, upon these modern Actæons, these Peeping Toms.

At that moment a man comes along on the run. Under the Patriot Altar has been found a keg of powder. The two culprits must have been there, not for the sake of boring holes through which they could look upward, as they had pretended, but in order to blow up the assembled Patriots.

It is only needful to draw out the bung from the keg, in order to know that it contains, or has contained, cheap wine, and not powder. Even if the keg contains gunpowder, a little reflection would show that if the two conspirators fired that keg, they would be themselves blown up first, and more thoroughly, than any of the Patriots. These considerations should prove the two jokers innocent of any serious crime; but there are times when nobody reflects, when nobody weighs the evidence, — times when nobody *wishes* to know the truth, or reflect upon the consequences of an action.

In an instant the squall becomes a storm. A group of strange men come upon the scene. Whence come they? Nobody knows. Whence came the men who killed Foulon, Berthier, Flesselles, thus aggravating the horrors of October, 1789? Out of the shades, whither they returned when their work of death was over.

These new-comers seize upon the unlucky pensioner and the poor barber. Both are thrown down. Pierced by dagger-thrusts, one of them, the pensioner, cannot rise. The other, the hairdresser, is dragged to a lamp-post. In a few seconds the cord is about his neck, and he is hoisted into the air. At the height of ten feet the weight of his body breaks the cord. Still alive, he falls to the ground. Raising himself an instant, he sees his comrade's head on the end of a pike. How happens it that a pike is always ready, just on the instant? At this sight he utters a scream and then swoons. Now

his head is cut off, or rather hacked off, and a second pike is forthwith in readiness to receive this bloody trophy.

It is immediately felt that these two heads must promenade through Paris with a popular escort, and the head-bearers go singing up Rue Grenelle, followed by a hundred roughs like themselves.

At nine o'clock the municipal officers, with the accompaniment of ushers and trumpets, are proclaiming, in Palace Royal Square, the decree of the Assembly, and the protective penalties which will follow any transgression of that decree, when these ruffians, from the Champ de Mars, come pouring into the square, through the Rue Saint Thomas by the Louvre.

This is an admirable buttress for the position taken by the city government. However harsh the repressive measures threatened, they cannot reach the height of the crime just committed.

The members of the Assembly begin to gather. From the Place du Palais-Royal to the Riding School is but a short distance, and the report of the rabble's proceedings has but to take a single bound, in order to set the legislative hall into confusion; only the victims of lawlessness are no longer merely a barber and an old pensioner, punished beyond all reason for a prank worthy of college boys. They are represented as two good citizens, the friends of public order, who have been slaughtered for advising the Revolutionists to respect the laws.

At once Regnault de Saint Jean d'Angély springs to the rostrum, and says: "Citizens, I call for martial law. I ask the Assembly that all those who encourage resistance among the people, whether by individual or collective publications, shall be declared guilty of the crime *lèse-nation*, — treason against France."

The Assembly rises almost in a body ; and, in accordance with Angély's proposal, declares all shall be regarded as public criminals who individually or collectively, by writings or publications, urge the people to disregard the votes of the Assembly.

This is practically to pronounce the innocent petitioners, in the Champ de Mars, guilty of treason ; and this is precisely what is intended by the vote.

Robespierre is on the watch in one corner of the Assembly. He hears the vote proclaimed, and at once hurries to the Jacobin Club, to give notice of what has been done.

The hall is deserted. Not over twenty-five or thirty members are wandering about in the old convent.

Santerre is there, however, awaiting the commands of his superiors. He is at once sent to the Champ de Mars, to warn the petitioners of approaching danger. There he finds two or three hundred people on the altar platform, signing the Jacobin petition prepared by Brissot, with Lacroix's Royalist clause eliminated by popular vote.

The hero of the day before, Billot, is the centre of this movement. He cannot sign for himself ; but he tells them his name, and his hand is guided, so that he inscribes his signature among the first.

Santerre ascends the platform, and announces that the Assembly declares all those to be in open rebellion who demand the dethronement of the King ; and he further adds that he is the envoy from the Jacobins, sent to withdraw the Jacobin petition prepared by Brissot.

Billot comes down three steps, and faces the afterwards celebrated brewer. These two men looking at each other, each taking the other's measure, are types of the two material forces moving the Nation at this period, — Paris and the Provinces.

They recognize each other as true brothers, for they fought together at the Bastille two years ago.

"Very well," says Billot, "the Jacobins can have their petition back again, but we'll make another."

"And that other petition," says Santerre, "needs only to be brought to me, in the Faubourg Saint Antoine, and I'll not only sign it myself, but I'll have it signed by all my hands." And he offers his coarse hand to Billot, who grasps it cordially.

At the sight of this powerful alliance, which unites city and country, there is loud applause.

Billot returns the old petition to Santerre, who at once takes himself off, making gestures of assent and comfort, which the people do not misunderstand. Besides, Santerre is already well known.

"It seems," says Billot, "that the Jacobins are afraid. Being cowards, they have the right to withdraw their document. So be it! But we, — we are not afraid, and we have the right to make another petition."

"Yes, yes!" cry several voices. "Another petition! Here! To-morrow!"

"And why not to-day?" asks Billot. "To-morrow? Who knows what may happen by to-morrow?"

"Yes, yes, yes!" cry several voices. "To-day! Right off!"

A group of noteworthy people forms around Billot. Strength has the virtue of the magnet, and draws others to itself.

This group is composed of delegates from the Cordeliers and the Amateur Jacobins. Either because they are more venturesome than their leaders, or not so well informed, these Revolutionists have come to the Champ de Mars in the teeth of counter-orders from their chiefs.

These persons for the most part bear names as yet unknown, but in one way or another they are soon to become celebrated.

There are Robert, Mademoiselle de Kéralio, the Rolands.

There is Brune, a typesetter, who is one day to become Marshal of France.

There is Hébert, a public writer, who is the future editor of that scurrilous journal called "Père Duchêne."

There is Chaumette, a journalist and medical student.

There is Sergent, a copperplate engraver, who is sometime to be the brother-in-law of Marceau, and also the manager of the famous Festivals of Reason.

There is Fabre d'Églantine, author of "The Epistolary Intrigue."

There is Henriot, the Master of the Guillotine.

There is Maillard, the dreaded sheriff of the Châtelet Court, of whom we have lost sight since that Sixth of October, but whom we may meet again on the Second of September.

There are Isabey the father and Isabey the son, — the latter the only one of the actors in the scene which we are describing, who will be alive and fresh to repeat its story sixty or seventy years hence, in 1855, at the age of eighty-eight.

"Now! Right off!" cry all those who are present; and a shout of applause goes up from the Champ de Mars.

"Who will wield the quill?" asks a voice.

"Me, you, everybody!" cries Billot. "This must be truly the people's petition."

One Patriot leaves the place at full speed. He is on the search for writing materials. While waiting for his return, the bystanders take hold of hands. They begin to dance the farandole, and sing the famous *Ça ira*.

In ten minutes the Patriot returns with the writing materials. For fear there should not be enough he brings a pint of ink, a whole package of quills, and five or six quires of paper.

Robert takes the pen. Mademoiselle de Kéralio, Madame Roland, and Monsieur Roland dictate by turns, while Robert writes the following petition:

PETITION TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

Written on the Patriot Altar,

July 17, 1791.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATION: You are near the end of your labors. Soon your successors, chosen by the people, will come and take your places, but without encountering the obstacles placed in your way by the Deputies of the two privileged orders, — the clergy and the nobility, — who are necessarily the enemies of the sacred principles of equality.

A great crime has been committed.

Louis Sixteenth fled. He unworthily abandoned his post of duty. The country was within a finger's breadth of anarchy. Certain citizens arrested the King at Varennes, and brought him back to Paris. The people of the capital request you to decide nothing hastily as to the fate of the royal culprit, but to wait for some expression of opinion from the eighty-two other departments of the Nation.

You differ in opinions. A cloud of addresses will come to the Assembly. All sections of the country will simultaneously demand that Louis shall be tried. You, gentlemen, have already prejudged him innocent, and beyond the reach of law, by declaring, in your vote of July 16, that the Constitutional Charter shall be presented to him for his adherence, as soon as that Constitution is finished.

Legislators! This is not the desire of the people, and we think that your greatest glory — your duty — consists in being the organ of the public will.

Undoubtedly, gentlemen, you have been constrained to this action by a crowd of refractory Deputies, who have beforehand recorded their antagonism to the Constitution ; but, gentlemen, — representatives of a generous and trusting people, — remember that two hundred and ninety Reactionists are not the voice of the whole National Assembly, and that the decree is null and void in its form and basis : inadequate in its basis, because contrary to the will of the true sovereigns ; erroneous in form, because carried through by two hundred and ninety unqualified persons.

These considerations, all relating to the common weal, and growing out of an imperative desire to avoid anarchy, — to which we shall be exposed by any want of harmony between the people and those who represent them, — justify us in demanding, in the name of all France, that you reconsider your decree of July 16, in reference to the King ; that you regard the offence of Louis the Sixteenth as proven, and himself as having abdicated his throne ; that you accept this abdication, and convoke a new legislative body, to proceed in a truly Constitutional manner to judge the King, and replace him with a new Executive Administration.

The petition being prepared, silence is called for. At that summons all noise ceases and all heads are bared. In a loud voice Robert reads the lines, already placed before the eyes of our readers.

They meet the wishes of all. No objection is raised ; but, on the contrary, unanimous applause breaks out as soon as the last phrase is read.

Now the petition is to be signed, — not only by two or three hundred people, but by perhaps ten thousand ; for through all the entrances to the Champ de Mars crowds are pouring in, and it is evident that in an hour more than fifty thousand persons will surround the Patriot Altar.

Those who have prepared the petition are the first to

sign it, and then they pass the quill to their neighbors. In a few seconds the whole page is covered with signatures, and so leaves of blank paper are distributed, of the same shape as that whereon the petition is written. These extra sheets are numbered in order, so as to be added to the original sheet.

After these leaves are distributed the people first begin to sign, laying the paper on the posts which form the four angles of the Patriot Altar. Then they write on the steps, on their knees, on the crowns of their hats, on anything upon which they can lay the petition.

In accordance with the orders of the Assembly, sent to Lafayette, — to whom has also been reported, not the petition then being signed, but the morning's assassination, — the first troops now arrive on the Champ de Mars ; but such is the preoccupation of the crowd, on account of the petition, that they hardly pay any attention to the troops ; yet what is about to take place is of vast importance.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RED FLAG.

THESE troops are headed by one of Lafayette's aides. Which one? His name is unknown. Lafayette always had so many aides, that history loses itself among them.

Whoever he is, a gunshot comes from the hillside, and strikes the young man; but the wound is not dangerous, and as this is a solitary shot, the soldiers disdain to notice it.

A similar scene takes place at Gros Caillou, where Lafayette appears with three thousand men and some fieldpieces.

Fournier is there, at the head of a band of miscreants, — doubtless the same who have just assassinated the barber and the one-legged pensioner, — and they are putting up a barricade; but Lafayette marches upon this barricade, and demolishes it.

Through the wheel-spokes of a wagon, while this is going on, Fournier fires his musket at Lafayette; but fortunately the gun misses fire. The barricade is carried and demolished, and Fournier is seized and brought before Lafayette.

"Who is this man?" he asks.

"He's the fellow who fired upon you; though it was a flash in the pan."

"Let him alone, and he'll get himself hanged in some other way."

Fournier does not get himself hanged. He disappears temporarily from sight, to reappear at the September massacres next year.

Lafayette reaches the Champ de Mars. They are signing the petition, and the most perfect tranquillity reigns. This tranquillity is so great that Madame de Condorcet is there, promenading, with her infant, a year old.

Lafayette advances as far as the Patriot Altar. He inquires what is going on, and they show him the petition. The petitioners also agree to go about their usual business as soon as the petition is signed. He can see in this nothing reprehensible, and withdraws with his soldiers.

But if the shot which wounds Lafayette's aide, and the flint which misses fire on himself, have not made loud reports in the Champ de Mars, they have roused a tremendous echo in the Assembly. It must not be forgotten that the Assembly is looking for a Royalist opportunity, and that some very slight event may bring that opportunity.

"Lafayette is wounded! One of his aides is killed! There is slaughter in the Champ de Mars!"

Such are the reports which find currency throughout Paris, and which the Assembly officially transmits to the Hôtel de Ville; but the Hôtel de Ville is already disturbed by what is going on at the Champ de Mars, and sends thither three municipal officers, Jacques, Hardy, and Renaud.

As they stand on the elevation of the Patriot Altar the signers of the petition see advancing towards them this new procession, which arrives from the waterside, for the Seine flows by one side of the field. A deputation of signers is sent to meet the procession.

The three city officials, who have come on purpose to see what is going on, go straight to the Patriot Altar; but instead of finding, as they expect, a factious crowd, irritated, threatening, and turbulent, they see only well-behaved citizens, some walking about in groups, others signing the petition, others dancing the farandole and singing the *Ça ira*.

The crowd is quiet, but perhaps the petition is rebellious. The officials ask to have it read to them.

The petition is read to them, from the first line to the last; and as has happened once before, this reading is followed by cheers and unanimous acclamations.

"Gentlemen," say the municipal officers, "we are charmed to note your orderly disposition. We have been told there was some disturbance here, but we have been deceived. We shall not fail to report what we have seen, to speak of the tranquillity which reigns in the Champ de Mars. So far from impeding the signing of your petition, we will protect your work with the public force, in case anybody tries to hinder you. If we were not engaged in official duties, we would sign the petition ourselves; and if you doubt our good intentions, we will remain here with you as hostages, till every signature is affixed to your paper."

This spirit of the petition must then be the general spirit, since the city officials themselves would gladly sign it, did not their position as office-holders forbid.

This adhesion of three men — whose advance the signers have defiantly awaited, regarding them as enemies, — encourages the petitioners.

In the foolish scuffle which has taken place between the populace and the National Guard, two fellows have been arrested. As commonly happens under similar circumstances, the two prisoners are perfectly innocent; so

the leaders among the petitioners demand that these two men be set at liberty.

"We cannot take that burden upon ourselves," respond the city delegates; "but name your commissioners. They shall go with us to the Hôtel de Ville, and justice will be done."

A dozen commissioners are accordingly appointed. Billot, being unanimously chosen to take part in this duty, takes his way towards the city, accompanied by his colleagues and the three public officials.

On their arrival at the Place de Grève, in front of the Hôtel de Ville, the commissioners are surprised to find the square so full of soldiers that it requires some pains to get through this forest of bayonets.

Billot is their guide, for it will be remembered that he is well acquainted with the Hôtel de Ville, which we have heretofore seen him enter more than once, with our friend Pitou.

At the door of the Council Hall the three officials ask the twelve commissioners to wait an instant, and then they open the door, enter, and do not reappear.

A whole hour the commissioners wait. No news! Impatiently Billot stamps his feet and frowns.

Suddenly the door opens. The whole municipal corporation appears, with Bailly at its head.

Bailly is very pale. Being pre-eminently a mathematician, he has a nice sense of justice and injustice. He feels himself urged on to a mistaken course of action; but the orders of the Assembly are before him, and Bailly will fulfil them to the letter.

Billot walks straight up to him, and says, in that firm tone with which our readers are already familiar: "Monsieur Mayor, we have been waiting for you over an hour."

"Who are you, and what have you to say to me?" asks Bailly.

"Who am I?" answers Billot. "I'm astonished you should ask such a question, Monsieur Bailly. Those who go to the left evidently don't recognize those who turn to the right. — I'm Billot!"

Bailly starts. That name recalls to his mind the man who was one of the first to enter the Bastille; the man who aided in the protection of the Hôtel de Ville, in those dreadful days when Foulon and Berthier were assassinated; the man who marched by the window of the royal carriage, the first time the King was brought from Versailles; the man who, on that occasion, affixed the tri-colored cockade to Louis Sixteenth's hat; the man who roused Lafayette on that awful October night; the man who brought the King back from Varennes.

"As to what I have to say," continues Billot, "I have *this* to say, that we are sent here by an assemblage of people in the Champ de Mars."

"And what do these people ask?"

"They ask that you keep the promise made by your three messengers, by setting free two citizens unjustly accused, and for whose innocence we vouch."

"Well," responds Bailly, trying to pass along, "do you suppose we can rely upon such pledges?"

"And why not?"

"Because they are made by seditious fellows."

The commissioners look at one another in astonishment. Billot scowls and says: "Seditious fellows? So we are rebels, are we?"

"Yes," says Bailly, "very seditious fellows! and I'm on my way now to the Champ de Mars, to restore good order."

Billot shrugs his shoulders and laughs, — such a rough

laugh as sounds like a threat, when coming from certain lips.

"Restore order in the Champ de Mars?" he says. "Why, your friend Lafayette has been there and gone away again; and your three delegates have been there, and they will tell you that the Champ de Mars is more quiet than the Hôtel de Ville!"

Just then the captain of a central company in the Bonne Nouvelle Battalion runs in, all excited.

"Where's the Mayor?" he asks.

Billot stands aside, so that Bailly can be seen, as he answers: "Here I am!"

"To arms, Monsieur Mayor, to arms!" shouts the captain. "There's fighting in the Champ de Mars, where fifty thousand scoundrels are preparing to march against the National Assembly."

Hardly are the words out of his mouth when Billot's heavy hand weighs on his shoulder, as the farmer asks: "Who says so?"

"Who says so? The Assembly!"

"Then the Assembly lies!" answers Billot.

"Monsieur!" says the captain, drawing his sword.

"The Assembly *lies!*" repeats Billot, grasping the sword, partly by the hilt and partly by the blade, and wrenching it from the captain's hands.

"Enough, enough, gentlemen!" says Bailly. "We will go and see for ourselves. Monsieur Billot, I beg you to return the captain's sword; and if you have any influence over those who have sent you here, go back to them, and ask them to disperse."

"To disperse?" cries Billot. "Let us see about that! The right of petition is guaranteed by law, and until the decree is annulled, nobody has any right—not even a mayor or the Commander of the National Guard—to

hinder citizens from expressing their wishes. You're going to the Champ de Mars? We'll precede you, Monsieur Mayor!"

Those who surround the actors in this scene wait but for an order — a word or a gesture — from Bailly, to arrest Billot; but Bailly feels that the voice which speaks so loudly and firmly is the voice of the people. He makes a sign to let Billot and the commissioners pass by unmolested.

As they descend to the square a large red flag, suspended from one of the windows of the Hôtel de Ville behind them, shakes out its bloody folds in the first breezes of a storm which overspreads the sky.

Unhappily this storm does not last many minutes. There is thunder, but no rain, and this but increases the heat of the day, and permeates the air with a little more electricity.

By the time Billot and the eleven other commissioners reach the Champ de Mars, the multitude has increased by nearly one-third. As nearly as the number of people in that immense basin can be estimated, there must be about sixty thousand souls. These sixty thousand men and women are on the slope which surrounds the Patriot Altar, and on the platform and steps of the altar itself.

Billot and his colleagues appear. This causes immense commotion. From all points the people rush towards them and press about them. Have the two innocent citizens been released? What is the Mayor's response?

The two citizens have not been released, and the Mayor has given no answer about them, except to say that the petitioners are a set of seditious fellows.

At this title the seditious fellows laugh good-naturedly, and they all resume their places, their promenades, their occupations.

During all this time they continue to sign the petition. Already four or five thousand signatures are counted. Before evening they may reckon on fifty thousand. The Assembly will feel obliged to yield before such startling unanimity.

Suddenly a citizen comes running, out of breath. Not only, like the commissioners, has he seen the red flag flying from the Hôtel de Ville windows, but he has also heard the joyful shouts with which the National Guards have greeted the announcement that they are to march on the Champ de Mars. Those guards have loaded their guns; and that being done, a municipal officer has gone from rank to rank, whispering to the leaders.

Then the whole mass of National Guardsmen, with Bailly and other municipal officials at the head, has put itself in motion, to come to the Champ de Mars.

The man who brings these details has hastened on ahead, in order to announce this sinister intelligence to the Patriots; but there reigns such peace, such harmony, such fraternity over the immense field, consecrated by the Federation of the preceding year, that citizens who are there, exercising a right recognized by the Constitution, cannot believe themselves to be thus menaced. They prefer to think the messenger mistaken.

They continue to sign the petition. The singing and dancing is redoubled.

However, they begin to hear the roll of a drum. The sound draws nearer. Then the petitioners begin to look about them and grow anxious. Among those standing on the slopes arises a great murmur, and they point to the approaching bayonets, which glitter like a waving field of steel.

The members of different Patriotic societies come together, and many propose to retire; but from the Patriot

Altar Billot calls aloud: "Brothers, what are we doing? Why this fear? Either the proclamation of martial law is directed against us, or it is not. If not aimed at us, why should we avoid it? If aimed at us, it will be made known to us. We shall be notified by public summons, and then it will be time enough to run away."

"Yes, yes!" is heard on all sides, "we are within the limits of the law. Let's wait for the summons. It must be three times read, — the Riot Act! Let's stay where we are."

Everybody remains. At that instant the beat of the drum draws very near, and detachments of the National Guards appear at the three entrances of the Champ de Mars.

A third of the armed mass appears at the opening near the École Militaire. Another third is seen through an opening a little lower down. The other third appears at the opening opposite the Chaillot Heights. On that side the troops cross the wooden bridge, and advance with the red flag at their head and Bailly in the ranks; only their red flag is an almost invisible ensign, which does not especially attract the eyes of the crowd to that detachment.

This is what the petitioners, gathered in the Champ de Mars, now see. Meanwhile, what do the new-comers see?

They see a vast plain, filled with inoffensive promenaders, and in the midst of this plain the Patriot Altar, a gigantic structure, on a platform which is accessible (as we have already said) by four wide staircases, over which four battalions could mount in solid ranks.

From this platform rise, like a pyramid, the steps leading to the smaller platform, crowned by the Patriot Altar, shaded by a beautiful palm. Each step, from the

lowest to the highest, serves as a bench, which holds a greater or less number of spectators, according to its capacity. This human pyramid is bright with animation.

The National Guards from Marais and from the Faubourg Saint Antoine, four thousand men or more, with their artillery, enter by the opening at the southern angle of the Military School, and range themselves in front of that building.

Lafayette has little confidence in the men of Marais and the Faubourgs, which constitute the democratic part of his army; so he has added to their numbers a battalion of hired soldiery.

These hirelings are the modern Pretorian Guard. They are composed, as we have said, of old soldiers, of members of the disbanded French Guard, of excited Lafayettees, who, knowing that their deity has been fired upon, wish to avenge this crime, which, in their opinion, is a greater offence than that of high treason against the Nation, which the King has committed.

The Hireling Guards come from the side near Gros Caillou, brilliant, formidable, and menacing. Entering the middle of the Champ de Mars, they find themselves at once in front of the Patriot Altar.

The third body, coming from the wooden bridge, preceded by the shabby red flag of which we have spoken, is composed of the National Guard Reserves, with which are mingled a hundred dragoons and a band of barbers, privileged to carry swords, and armed to the teeth.

Through the same openings by which the National Guards enter, come also several squadrons of cavalry. They raise the dust, scarcely laid by the short rain, which for a moment seemed like a harbinger of peace; and this dust shuts off from the spectators their view

of the impending drama, which can only be seen through a murky veil, or through rents in the sandy cloud.

What is thus partly seen by spectators, through a veil or through the rents, we will try to describe.

There is first the crowd, thrown into living eddies by the cavalry, whose horses are driven at full speed around this vast circus. The crowd, completely shut in by the circle of iron, seeks a refuge at the foot of the Patriot Altar, as at the threshold of an inviolable sanctuary.

Then from the waterside is heard a single gunshot, and the smoke of a vigorous fusillade rises towards the sky.

Bailly is received by shouts from the boys who cover the slopes of Grenelle. In the midst of these outcries a shot is heard. A ball whistles behind the Mayor's head, and slightly wounds a dragoon. Bailly orders his men to fire, but to fire into the air, simply to frighten the crowd; but hardly has the echo died away when another fusillade responds. This fusillade comes from the Hireling Guards.

Upon whom, upon what, do they fire? On that inoffensive crowd surrounding the Patriot Altar.

A scream of fright follows the discharge; and now is seen a rare spectacle, which is to be more common in the future,—the people fleeing in all directions, leaving behind them motionless corpses, and wounded bodies weltering in their blood. Amidst the smoke and dust the enraged cavalry are in pursuit of the fugitives.

The Champ de Mars presents a deplorable aspect. Everywhere are injured women and children.

As always happens under similar circumstances, the luxury of blood, the frenzy of carnage, spreads far and wide. The artillery is placed in position, and the gunners make ready to fire. Lafayette has barely time to



ride to the spot, and put himself and his horse before a cannon's mouth.

After a headlong and blind rush hither and thither, the doomed rabble instinctively throws itself into the ranks of the National Guards from the Marais and the Faubourg Saint Antoine. These guards open their ranks to receive the fugitives. The wind having blown the smoke in the faces of these friendly soldiers, they have not seen what has really taken place, and fancy the fugitives are actuated by fear alone. When the smoke is dissipated, they are horrified to behold a heap of dead bodies and the earth stained with blood.

At that instant comes an aide at full gallop, with orders for the National Guards from the Faubourg Saint Antoine and the Marais to march on and sweep the place, so as to effect a junction with the other two military detachments; but these democratic troops propose, on the contrary, to defy the aide, and the troopers who are charging upon the populace. The aide and the cavalry alike recoil before these Patriotic bayonets. All the people who have fled to that side find impregnable security.

In an instant the great field is evacuated. There remain in it only the bodies of men, women, and children, killed or wounded by the terrible discharge of the Hireling Guard, and the unhappy fugitives cut down by the dragoons or trampled under the feet of their horses.

In the very heat of this carnage, undaunted by the fall of the dead and the cries of the wounded, beneath the discharges of musketry and under the mouths of the cannon, a few Patriots gather up the papers containing the signatures to their petition; and even as the men have found a refuge in the ranks of the Marais and Saint Antoine National Guards, so these signatures,

in all probability, find a secure asylum in the house of Santerre.

Who gave that unfortunate order to fire? No one knows. That is one of the historic mysteries which remain unexplained, despite the most conscientious investigations. Neither chivalrous Lafayette nor honest Bailly loved bloodshed; and yet this blood, crying from the ground, pursued them to the end of their days. From that moment their popularity was lost.

How many victims remained on that field of carnage? Nobody knows. Some underrated the number, in order to lessen the responsibility of the Mayor and the Commanding General; while others overrated it, so as to increase the popular ire.

When night came, these corpses were thrown into the Seine. The Seine, a blind accomplice, carried them to the ocean, wherein they were swallowed up.

All in vain were Bailly and Lafayette not only absolved from guilt, but felicitated by the Assembly. Vainly did the Constitutionalist journals proclaim this day's work a triumph of law. The triumph was blasted with mildew and branded with shame, as should be every day of disaster, wherein rulers slay those who are not in arms against lawful authority; for such executions are only assassinations.

The people, who generally give things their proper names, called this pretended triumph the Massacre of the Champ de Mars.

CHAPTER XX.

AFTER THE MASSACRE.

LET us return to Paris, and see what is going on there. Paris heard the noise of the fusillade, and shuddered. Paris did not quite know which party was right and which party was wrong ; but Paris felt that she had received a wound, and that her blood flowed from this wound.

Robespierre stayed at the Jacobin Club, like a commander in his fortress. There he was really strong ; but that popular citadel had been ripped open, and everybody could enter through the breach left by Barnave, Duport, and Lameth, in their withdrawal.

The Jacobin sent one of their own number to learn the true state of things.

As to their neighbors of the Feuillant Club, they had no need to send out for the news. They were kept informed, hour by hour, minute by minute, of what was transpiring. Their own game was being played, and so far they were the gainers.

The Jacobin messenger returned in about ten minutes. He had met some of the fugitives, and they had hurled at him this horrible information : "Lafayette and Bailly are slaughtering the people."

Everybody had not heard Bailly's cry of woe, everybody had not seen Lafayette fearlessly throw himself directly in front of the loaded cannon.

The messenger at once hurried back to the old convent, and his cries frightened the small number of zealous members — not over thirty or forty — still remaining there.

They comprehended that it was upon themselves, the Jacobins, that the Feuillants would try to throw the responsibility of the first provocation. Had not the first petition come from the Jacobins? To be sure, it had been withdrawn; but the second petition — which had not been withdrawn — was evidently the offspring of the first. No wonder the Jacobins were frightened.

That white face, that phantom of virtue, that shadow of Rousseau's philosophy, called Robespierre, was no longer merely pale, but livid. The prudent Deputy from Arras tried to slip away, but could not. He was forced to remain and take his stand. His choice was inspired by fear.

The Jacobins declared their disavowal of the false, or falsified, publications attributed to them, and were ready to swear anew their fidelity to the Constitution, and their willingness to obey the decrees of the National Assembly.

Hardly had this declaration been made when, through the corridors of the old Jacobin convent, resounded a great noise from the street. This noise was made up of laughter, jeers, yells, threats, and songs.

The Jacobins pricked up their ears, and hoped the noise would pass them by, and keep on to the Palais Royal, which Orleans occupied. No! The noise ceased, and the rabble came to a halt in front of the low and gloomy convent portal, which opened upon the Rue Saint Honoré.

To add to the terror which already reigned within, somebody called out: "Those are the Hireling Guards,

returning from the slaughter of the Champ de Mars. They mean to demolish us with cannon-shot."

Fortunately some soldiers had been placed at the entrance, as a matter of precaution. They closed and secured all the openings into the old place, so as to prevent this troop, furious and drunk with the blood already spilled, from being tempted into a fresh onslaught.

One by one the Jacobins and spectators went away. This evacuation did not take long, for even when the hall was first opened, there were present barely thirty or forty members; and the galleries did not afterward contain over a hundred spectators.

Among the last was Madame Roland, who was everywhere that day. She relates how one Jacobin, when the rumor spread that the Hireling Guards were about to invade the hall, lost his head to such an extent that he climbed into the seats reserved for women. She, Madame Roland, made him ashamed of his alarm, and he returned to the floor, where he belonged.

As we have said, actors and spectators, one after the other, shied through the half-open door.

Robespierre went out in his turn. Should he go to the right or the left? He must turn to the left, if he wished to go to his own place; for, as is well known, he then lived at the farther end of the Marais; but in that case he must make his way through the ranks of the Hireling Guards. He preferred to go towards the Faubourg Saint Honoré, and ask an asylum with Pétion, who dwelt in that quarter; so he turned to the right.

Robespierre was very anxious to remain unnoticed, but how could he do so, with that olive coat, plain to the extreme limit of civic plainness, — for the short and striped coat did not come in till a later period; with

the spectacles, which testified that burning the midnight candle had aged the worthy Patriot's eyes earlier than usual ; with that stealthy step, like that of the weasel and the fox ?

Hardly had he taken twenty steps in the street before two or three persons said, one to another : " Robespierre ! — See, Robespierre ! — That 's Robespierre ! "

Women paused and clasped their hands. Women liked Robespierre, who, in his speeches, took great pains to lay stress upon sentimentalism.

" How, that dear Monsieur Robespierre ? Is that he ? "

" Yes ! "

" Where is he ? "

" There, there ! — See ? — That little man, — slender and well powdered, — walking along by the wall. He tries to hide, because he's so modest ! "

Really our Robespierre did not hide himself through modesty, but through fear ; but who dared suggest that the virtuous and incorruptible Robespierre, the tribune of the people, tried to conceal himself out of cowardice ?

One man stuck his head under Robespierre's nose, to make sure it was he. Robespierre pulled his hat over his eyes, not knowing why he was so closely inspected. The man recognized him and cried out : " Huzza for Robespierre ! "

Robespierre would have preferred having to do with an enemy, rather than with such a friend.

" Robespierre ! " cried another bystander, still more fanatical. " Long live Robespierre ! If we must needs have a king, why not Robespierre ? "

Oh sublime Shakespeare ! " Cæsar is dead, that his assassin might be Cæsar ! "

If any man ever cursed his popularity, it was Robespierre at that moment. A great circle of people gathered about him, and it was even proposed to carry him along in triumph. Under his glasses he peeped in terror from right to left, trying to detect some open door or dark alley into which he could flee, and be out of sight.

Just then he felt himself grasped by the arm, and pulled violently aside, while a voice whispered, with a friendly accent: "Come!"

Robespierre yielded to the impulsion, and let himself be hurried on. Presently he heard a door shut behind him, and found himself in a joiner's shop.

This joiner was a man from forty-two to forty-five years old. Near him was his wife. In a room at the end of the shop were two girls, one sixteen and the other eighteen years of age, who were preparing the family supper.

Robespierre was very pale, and seemed on the verge of fainting.

"Leonora," said the joiner, "a glass of water!" Leonora, the carpenter's eldest daughter, approached timidly, with a glass of water in her hand. Perhaps the lips of the austere tribune touched the fingers of Mademoiselle Duplay; for Robespierre was now, for the first time, in the house of the carpenter of that name.

While Madame Roland, who knows Robespierre's peril and exaggerates it, is on a bootless errand to the Marais district, to offer him a shelter with herself and husband, let us forsake Robespierre, who is secure with the excellent Duplay family, — which he will one day make his own, — in order to enter the Tuileries, in the track of Doctor Gilbert.

Again the Queen is in expectation; but it is not Barnave for whom she waits; nor is she in the lower apartments of Madame Campan, but in her own rooms. Moreover, she is not standing, with her hand on the door-latch, but seated in an armchair, her head in her hand.

She is waiting for Weber, whom she has sent to the Champ de Mars, and who has witnessed the whole scene from the heights of Chaillot.

In order to be fair towards the Queen, — and better understand that hatred towards the French, for which she has been so greatly blamed, — inasmuch as we have recounted her sufferings during the journey from Varennes, let us also relate what she endured after her return. A historian may be partial; but we are only romancers, and partiality is not permitted to the romancer.

The King and Queen having been arrested, the people had but one idea, — that having once fled, they would flee a second time, and that the second time they would gain the frontier. There was a popular notion that the Queen was a clever sorceress, like Medea, who might fly from her window, in a car drawn by two griffins. Such ideas were not only current among the common people, but they found credence among the officers set to guard Marie Antoinette.

Gouvion, who had let her slip through his fingers at the time of the escape to Varennes, — and whose mistress, a guardian of the wardrobe, then warned Mayor Bailly of the intended departure, — declared that he would not be responsible for the result, if any other woman except Madame de Rochereul (this, it will be remembered, was the name of the lady of the wardrobe) had the right to enter the Queen's apartments. He therefore placed at the bottom of the stairs, leading to the royal apartments, a portrait of Madame de Rochereul, in order that sentinels

might detect any other woman who attempted to ascend to the Queen's rooms.

Being informed of this order, the Queen went at once to the King and complained of the insult. The King could not believe it, and sent downstairs to inquire into the matter ; but he found the report to be true.

Then the King appealed to Lafayette, and demanded the removal of that portrait. The portrait was removed, and the Queen's usual attendants resumed their service ; but in place of this humiliating order, another precaution was instituted, equally offensive. The battalion officers were regularly stationed in the parlor called the Grand Cabinet, adjoining the Queen's bedroom, and they were ordered to keep the door always open, so that they could have an eye on the royal family.

One day the King ventured to shut this door. Immediately an officer reopened it. A moment afterwards the King closed it again ; but it was opened anew, and the officer said : "Sire, it is useless for you to shut this door ; for as often as you shut it, I shall reopen it. Such are my instructions."

The door remained open. The only favor officially obtainable was this, — that while the Queen was dressing and undressing, the door might be closed against the framework, without being entirely shut. As soon as she was dressed or abed, the door was again set wide open.

This tyranny was so intolerable, that the Queen conceived the idea of placing her attendant's bed near her own, so that it should stand between her Majesty and the door ; and this bed, furnished with curtains and rolling on castors, made a sort of screen, behind which she could dress and undress.

One night, seeing that the *femme de chambre* was asleep and the Queen wide awake, the sentinel profited by

Madame Campan's somnolence to enter the room, and draw near the Queen's bedside.

The Queen met his approach with that haughty air which she knew how to assume when anybody failed in proper respect; but this courageous fellow, who had no idea of showing her any disrespect, was not disturbed by her haughtiness, and looked at her with an unmistakable expression of pity, as he said: "On my honor, Madame, now that I find you alone, I wish to give you some advice!" and at once, without caring to know whether the Queen did or did not wish to hear him, he unfolded to her what he should do, were he in her place.

The Queen had noted his intrusion with anger; but, reassured by his tone of good-nature, she let him go on, and finally listened to him with profound melancholy.

During the interview the attendant awoke. Seeing a man near the Queen's bed, she screamed, and wished to summon help; but the Queen checked her, saying: "No, Campan. Let me listen to what this gentleman says. Monsieur is a good Frenchman. Though he is deceived, like so many others, as to our intentions, his observations betray a genuine attachment to royalty." So the officer went on to the end, telling the Queen all he wished to say.

Before the Varennes journey Marie Antoinette had not a gray hair. During the night following the scene between Charny and herself, which we have before described, her hair became almost white. Perceiving this sorrowful change she smiled bitterly, and cut off a lock to send to Madame de Lamballe, then in London, with the following words:

Blanched by sorrow!

We saw her waiting for Barnave, and we know his

hopes; but he had great difficulty in leading her to share these hopes.

Marie Antoinette feared all scenes of violence. Hitherto these occurrences had always worked against her, as witness the capture of the Bastille, those dreadful October days, and the arrest at Varennes.

The fatal discharge in the Champ de Mars was heard as far as the Tuileries, and the Queen's heart was profoundly disturbed over it. Taking it all together, the Varennes affair was a great lesson to her. Until then the Revolution had seemed to her to mean no more than one of Pitt's English schemes, or one of Orléans's intrigues. She had believed Paris misled by a few demagogues, and she spoke, as did the King, about "our faithful provinces." Now she had seen the provinces, and found them more revolutionary than Paris.

The Assembly was too old, too decrepit, too much in its dotage to faithfully keep the engagements which Barnave had made in its behalf. Besides, was not its term of existence nearly over? The embraces of the dying are not always safe and wholesome.

The Queen was waiting with great anxiety for Weber, as already stated. The door opened. She turned her eyes quickly to that side; but instead of the portly Austrian form of her foster-brother, she saw the stern and cold face of Doctor Gilbert.

She did not much like this Royalist, with his Constitutional theories so plainly mapped out, and regarded him as little better than a Republican. Although she felt much respect for him, she would not have sent for him in any crisis, either physical or moral; but when he was in her presence, she submitted to his influence.

When she saw him enter she trembled, for she had not seen him since she listened to his scathing rebuke,

the evening of her return from Varennes. "It is you, Doctor?" she said.

Gilbert bowed as he replied: "Yes, Madame, it is I. I know that you are expecting Weber; but the news which he will bring you I bring you also, and more accurately. He was on the side beyond the Seine, where there was no slaughter; while I, on the other hand, was on the field, this side of the river, where the slaughter took place"

"Slaughter? What has happened, Monsieur?"

"A great misfortune, Madame. The Court party has triumphed."

"The Court party has triumphed? You call that a misfortune, Monsieur Gilbert?"

"Yes, because the victory has been won by terrible means, which will weaken the victors, and perhaps lay them low, beside the defeated party."

"But what has happened?"

"Lafayette and Bailly have fired on the populace, and in such a way that henceforth they can serve you no longer."

"Why so?"

"Because their popularity is gone."

"And what were the people doing upon whom they fired?"

"They were signing a petition asking for the removal."

"The removal of whom?"

"Of the King."

"And you think it was wrong to fire on them after that?" asked the Queen, her eyes aflame.

"I think it would have been better to convince than to shoot them."

"Convince them of what?"

"Of the King's sincerity."

“But the King is sincere!”

“Pardon, Madame! Three days ago I was with the King. I spent a whole evening trying to make him understand that his real enemies are his two royal brothers, Condé, and the other fugitives from the kingdom. On my knees I supplicated the King to break all relations with them, and honestly adopt the Constitution, with a proviso that two or three articles should be changed, whose performance would be practically impossible. The King was convinced, — at least so I believed, — and had the kindness to promise me that all should be over between himself and those refugees. Hardly was my back turned, Madame, when the King signed, and had you also sign, a letter for his brother, *Monsieur*, in which he gave him full powers to treat with the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia.”

The Queen blushed, like a child detected in an act of disobedience; but a child, thus detected, would have bowed its head; whereas she, on the contrary, straightway recovered herself.

“Do our enemies have spies even in the King’s study?”

“Yes, Madame,” replied Gilbert, coolly, “and this is what makes every false step so perilous on the King’s part.”

“But, Monsieur, the letter was entirely written by the King’s own hand. After being signed by myself, it was folded and sealed by the King, and then given to the messenger whose business it was to deliver it.”

“True, Madame!”

“Was that messenger arrested?”

“The letter was read.”

“Are we then surrounded by traitors?”

“All men are not Charnys!”

“What do you mean?”

“Alas, Madame, I mean that one of the fatal auguries which presage the destruction of kings is the alienation of their friends, who should be bound to their fortunes by hoops of steel.”

“I have not sent Monsieur de Charny away,” bitterly replied the Queen. “Charny withdrew of his own accord. When kings are unfortunate, there are no bonds strong enough to keep friends by royalty’s side.”

Gilbert looked at the Queen, and softly shook his head.

“Do not calumniate Monsieur de Charny, Madame, or the blood of his brothers will cry out from the tomb, that the Queen of France is ungrateful.”

“Monsieur!” exclaimed Marie Antoinette.

“You know very well that I speak the truth, Madame! You know well enough that, whenever real danger betides you, Charny will be at his post, and that his post will be one of danger.”

The Queen lowered her head; but presently she said, with much impatience: “You did not come to talk to me about Charny, I suppose?”

“No, Madame! but ideas, like events, are bound together by invisible threads; and those are suddenly brought into the daylight, which were better left hidden in the heart’s obscurity. — No, I came to speak to the *Queen*. Pardon me if, in my temper, I have spoken to the *woman*; but I am ready to atone for my error.”

“And what then do you wish to say to the Queen, Monsieur?”

“I wish to place before her eyes the situation both of France and Europe. This is what I wish to say: Madame, you are playing a game in which the happiness or

misery of the world lies in your hands. In that frightful October of two years ago you lost the first game of the rubber. Just now — at least so it seems in the eyes of your courtiers — you have won the second game. Now you are to begin the third game, which is called *la belle*. If you lose, away go your stakes, — throne, liberty, and perhaps life.”

The Queen drew herself up proudly. “Monsieur, do you think we would recoil through cowardice?”

“I know the King is brave; he is a descendant of Henry the Fourth. I know the Queen’s heroism, for she is the daughter of Maria Theresa. I only seek, therefore, to reach them through their convictions. Unhappily, I doubt if I can ever arouse in the heart of my King or Queen the conviction which is in my own.”

“Why take so much trouble, Monsieur, if you deem it useless?”

“To discharge my duty, Madame. When one lives in such tempestuous times as ours, do you fancy it is pleasant to be continually compelled to say to one’s self: This effort also will be unfruitful, but I will discharge my duty?”

The Queen looked Gilbert straight in the eyes. “First of all, Monsieur, do you think it may be yet possible to save the King?”

“I so believe!”

“And royalty also?”

“As I hope!”

“Well, Monsieur,” said the Queen, with a sad, deep sigh, “you are happier than I. Both are lost, — as I believe, — and I contend with Fate, only for the sake of satisfying my conscience.”

“Yes, Madame, I can well understand that, because

you desire a despotic sovereignty and an absolute monarch. You are like a miser, who will not sacrifice a part of his fortune for the sake of safety, even when he comes in sight of the shore, which will repay him more than he loses by shipwreck. He clings fast to his treasures, till drawn down by their deadly weight. You also will drown through your tenacity, hampered by baubles you strive to retain. Take advantage of the tempest. Throw the past to the winds, and swim towards the future !”

“To throw aside the past would be to break faith with all the kings of Europe.”

“Yes ! but that means an alliance with the French people.”

“Frenchmen are our enemies !”

“Because you have taught them to distrust you.”

“The French people cannot successfully fight against a European coalition.”

“Let them have at their head a king who unreservedly adheres to the Constitution, and the French can conquer all Europe.”

“It would require a million of men to do that !”

“Europe is not to be conquered with a million soldiers, Madame, but Europe may be conquered with a single idea. Plant along the Rhine and on the Alps the tri-colored flag, with this motto, *Death to Tyrants ! Liberty to the Nations !* and Europe will be conquered.”

“Truly, Monsieur, there are times when I am tempted to believe the wisest men insane.”

“Ah Madame, Madame ! can you not see what France has become in the sight of all other nations ? Whatever the crimes of individuals, whatever local excesses may be committed, these do not stain the white robe of France, nor soil her pure hands. France is the virgin Goddess of Liberty. The whole world loves her. From the Low

Countries of the north, from the Rhine, from sunny Italy, millions of voices invoke her aid. She has only to set her feet beyond her own frontier, to find the nations kneeling before her. When France comes with her hands full of liberty, she is no longer a single nation ; she becomes the type of immutable justice, of eternal reason and right. Oh Madame, Madame ! profit by the fact that France has not yet reached the point of violence ; for if you wait too long, these hands, now extended fraternally to the world, will be turned upon herself. Belgium, Germany, Italy now follow each movement of France with looks of love and joy. Belgium says to France, *Come !* Germany exclaims, *I await thee !* Italy says to her, *Save me !* In the far north an unknown hand has written, in the Council of Gustavus of Sweden, *No war with France !* Besides, not one of the kings, whom you would call to your help, is ready for war. Two empires hate us profoundly. When I say two empires, I should rather say an empress and a minister, — Catherine the Second of Russia and Pitt of England ; but they are powerless against us, — at least for the present. Catherine the Second holds Turkey under one claw and Poland under the other. She will need two or three years in which to subdue the one and devour the other. She urges the Germans against us, and offers them France. She makes your brother Leopold ashamed of his supineness. She calls his attention to the invasion of Holland by the King of Prussia, simply to avenge an affront to his sister. She says, Russia says, *March on !* but Leopold marches not. Pitt is swallowing India, and at this moment he is like a boa-constrictor, suffering from laborious indigestion. If we wait till he is all over it, he will attack us, not so much through a direct foreign war, as by encouraging civil war in France. I know you stand

in mortal dread of this Pitt. I know you acknowledge that you never speak of him without experiencing a death-shudder. Do you wish for some means of smiting his heart? Make France a republic with a king. Instead of that, what are you doing, Madame? What is your friend the Princess Lamballe doing? She tells England, where she represents you, that the great ambition of France is to have a Charter, something like the Great Charter, the *Magna Charta* of England; that the French Revolution, bridled and ridden by the King, has passed its crisis and suffers a reaction. What does Pitt respond to her advances? That he will not suffer France to become a republic, that he will save the monarchy; but all the caresses, all the arguments, all the prayers of Lamballe cannot make him promise to save the monarch, for he hates that monarch. Is it not this very monarch, Louis Sixteenth, — a Constitutional king, a philosophic king, — who has disputed Pitt's claim to India, and helped the American colonies to wrench themselves from under the British yoke? For Louis Sixteenth, Pitt desires but one thing, — that history shall paint him as the companion portrait of Charles the First."

"Monsieur, Monsieur!" cried the startled Queen, "who has disclosed to you all these things?"

"The same men who tell me the contents of your Majesty's letters."

"Then we have no longer a thought which belongs solely to ourselves?"

"I have already told you, Madame, that the kings of Europe are entangled in an invisible network, against which it is useless to contend. Do not resist, Madame! Put yourself at the head of the ideas you now try to hold back, and then this network will become your defensive armor. Those who now hate you will become

your defenders. Invisible daggers, which now threaten you, will be turned, not into pruning-hooks, but into swords, ready to smite your enemies."

"You forget, Monsieur, that those whom you call our enemies are kings, — our brothers."

"Ah Madame! Once call the French people your children, and you will see of how little account are brothers, in politics and diplomacy. Besides, can't you see that all these kings and princes are marked with a fatal seal, the stamp of madness? Let us begin with your brother Leopold, worn out at forty-two, in his Tuscan seraglio, transported to Vienna, trying to rally his moribund faculties with the murderous excitements he prepares for himself. Look at Frederick of Prussia. Look at Gustavus of Sweden. One died and the other will die without posterity; for it is well known to everybody, that the present heir of Sweden's throne is the son of Monk, and not of King Gustave. Look at Portugal's King, with his three hundred nuns. Look at the King of Saxony, with his three hundred and fifty-four bastards. Look at Catherine, the Pasiphae of the North, for whom the bull of classic story would not suffice, and who has three armies from which she chooses her lovers. — Oh Madame, Madame! can't you see that all these kings and all these queens are marching into a gulf, into an abyss, into suicide, and that if you wish, — *you*, — instead of marching with them into suicide, into a ravine, into the gulf of desolation, you may march into a world-wide empire, a universal monarchy?"

"Why don't you say all this to the King?" asked the disquieted Queen.

"Indeed I have, Madame; but, like yourself, he has evil geniuses, who undo all that I have done." Then he added, with deep melancholy: "You tired out Mirabeau,

you are wearying Barnave ; and you'll use me as you used them, and that's all it amounts to ! ”

“ Monsieur Gilbert,” said the Queen, “ wait here for me. — I wish to see the King a moment, and then I'll come back.”

Gilbert bowed ; and the Queen went out by the door leading to the King's rooms.

The Doctor waited ten minutes, fifteen minutes, half an hour. At last a door opened ; but it was one opposite to that by which the Queen had made her exit.

An usher entered. After looking carefully about him on all sides he came towards Gilbert, made a Masonic sign, gave him a letter, and went away again. Gilbert opened the letter and read :

Thou art wasting thy time, Gilbert. At this very moment the Queen and King are listening to Breteuil, who comes from Vienna, and brings with him this advice : “ Treat Barnave like Mirabeau. Gain time by swearing to support the Constitution, and by executing it to the letter, so as to show its impracticability. France will cool off and get weary. The French are feather-brained. They will take up with some new fad, and Liberty will go its way ; or if Liberty is not forgotten, a year will be gained, and in a year we shall be ready for war.”

Gilbert, let those two fools slide, who are still derisively called King and Queen, and betake thyself forthwith to the hospital at Gros Caillou. There thou wilt find a dying man, — not so sick as Marie Antoinette and Louis, perchance ; but thou mayest perhaps save *him*, whereas *they* cannot be saved, and may pull thee after themselves in their downfall.

The letter had no signature, but Gilbert recognized Cagliostro's writing. At that instant Madame Campan entered, by the private doorway, and handed Gilbert a note, which read as follows :

The King begs Doctor Gilbert to put in writing the policy which he has suggested to the Queen.

Detained by an important affair, the Queen regrets that she cannot see Doctor Gilbert again soon, and it will be useless for him to wait for her longer.

Gilbert read the note, meditated a moment, and muttered, shaking his head: "The idiots!"

"Have you no word to send to their Majesties, Monsieur?" asked Madame Campan.

Gilbert gave her the unsigned letter which he had just received. "There is my answer," he said, and left the room.

CHAPTER XXI.

NO MORE MASTERS ! NO MORE MISTRESSES !

BEFORE following Gilbert to the hospital at Gros Caillou, where his services are needed for the unknown patient commended to his care by Cagliostro, let us take a leap of some weeks ahead, and get a last peep at the Assembly, which is about to dissolve, after accepting the Constitution, whereon depends the retention of Louis the Sixteenth upon his throne ; and let us see what the Court has gained by that fatal victory of July 17, which will cost Bailly his head two years hence.

Then we may return to the chief persons of our narrative, of whom we have partly lost sight, carried away by the political vortex, which compels us to place under the eyes of our readers the great popular street disturbances, where individuals disappear, giving place to the masses.

We saw the danger incurred by Robespierre ; and we know how he escaped — thanks to the intervention of Carpenter Duplay — the triumph brought upon him by his wellnigh fatal popularity.

While Robespierre was supping quietly, in the little dining-room opening upon the courtyard, with the husband, wife, and their two daughters, his friends were very anxious about him, having been informed of the perils to which he had been exposed.

Madame Roland was especially anxious. This devoted creature forgot that she had been seen and recognized at

the Patriot Altar, and ran the same risk as all the other Patriots who had taken part in drawing up that obnoxious petition. She began by bringing to her own lodgings Robert and Mademoiselle Kéralio ; and when it was known, that same night, that the Assembly was preparing an accusation against Robespierre, Madame Roland sought his home at the extremity of the Marais District, in order to warn him. Not finding him there she came back along the Des Théatins, to Buzot's house.

Buzot was one of Madame Roland's admirers. She knew her great influence over him. This was why she applied to him. Buzot immediately passed the word on to Grégoire. If Robespierre's name was attacked by anybody in the Feuillant Club, Grégoire was to defend him. If the attack was made in the Assembly, Buzot was to be the defender. This was the more praiseworthy in Buzot, because he was no worshipper of Robespierre.

Grégoire was on hand at the meeting of the Feuillants, and Buzot was at the Assembly ; but in neither place was there any attempt to accuse Robespierre. Deputies and Feuillants were alike disconcerted by their victory, and in consternation over the sanguinary step which had been taken in behalf of the Royalists.

Instead of any attack upon individuals, one was made upon the clubs in general. One member of the Assembly demanded their immediate closure. For a few minutes it seemed as if this measure would be carried unanimously, but Duport and Lafayette opposed it. To abolish clubs would be to abolish the Feuillant Club, as well as the Jacobin and Cordelier. Lafayette and Duport had not yet outgrown their delusion as to the power which the Feuillant Club might become in their hands. They believed that the Feuillants would take

the place of the Jacobins, and that through this immense organization they could control the mind of all France.

The next day the Assembly received the reports from the Mayor of Paris and the Commander of the National Guard. All hands were agreed upon deceiving themselves, and so the comedy was not difficult to play.

Both Mayor and Commander referred to the great disorder in the city, which they had been obliged to repress. They spoke of the morning assassinations and the afternoon gunshots, two events which bore no special relation to each other. They spoke of the danger which threatened the King, the Assembly, and society in general, — dangers which they, better than anybody else, knew had never existed.

The Assembly thanked Lafayette and Bailly for an energy they had never thought of putting forth, and congratulated them over a victory which both deplored from the depths of their hearts. Thanks were also rendered to Heaven, that with "one fell swoop" the insurrection and the insurgents had alike been annihilated.

Listening to these felicitations, one might have believed the Revolution all over. The Revolution was just beginning!

While this was going on, the Old Jacobins, judging the next day by the evening before, imagined themselves attacked, pursued, tracked, and prepared to gain pardon for their real importance, by an assumption of feigned humility.

Although still trembling at the proposal that he should be King in place of Louis Sixteenth, Robespierre proposed an address, in the name of the absent as well as the present members of his club.

In this address he warmly thanked the Assembly for

its generous efforts, wisdom, firmness, and vigilance, its impartial and incorruptible justice.

How the Feuillants regained their courage ! No wonder they believed themselves all-powerful, when they beheld this humiliation of their opponents. For a time they believed themselves not only masters of Paris, but of France.

Alas ! The Feuillants did not understand the situation. In separating themselves from the Jacobins the Feuillants became simply a second Assembly, the duplicate, the reflection, the echo of the chief and real Assembly. The likeness between the two associations was seen even in this, that membership in each depended upon the payment of taxes, active citizenship, and registration on the voting list.

The people now had two chambers of middle-class representatives instead of one ; but this was not at all what was desired. The call was for a popular chamber, one which was not the ally, but the opponent, of the National Assembly, a society which would not aid in royalty's reconstruction, but would force it onward to destruction.

The Feuillants did not meet the public demand, so the public abandoned the Feuillants during their short transfer ; for their popularity was lost when they crossed the street, from one old convent to the other, though the two meeting-places were so near together.

In July there were four hundred prominent political societies. Of these four hundred societies, three hundred were affiliated equally with the Feuillants and Jacobins, while one hundred adhered to the Jacobins alone. Between July and September six hundred new societies were established, whereof only one hundred corresponded with the Feuillants.

In proportion as the Feuillants waned, the Jacobins renewed their youth, under the leadership of Robespierre, who began to be the most popular man in France. Cagliostro's prediction to Gilbert, in regard to the petty lawyer from Arras, was being accomplished. He was likely to be the death of royalty. Perhaps we shall see as faithfully fulfilled what Cagliostro said about the little Corsican from Ajaccio, who was to build anew the throne of Charlemagne.

Meantime the hour sounded for the end of the National Assembly. True it tolled slowly, as for an old man, with whom life consumes itself drop by drop and goes out spark by spark.

After voting three thousand laws, the Assembly at last finished its revision of the Constitution.

This Constitution was an iron cage, wherein — almost in spite of the Assembly, and without its own conscious knowledge — the King was tightly enclosed. The bars of the cage were gilded; but after all, however thick the gold-plating, these bars could not disguise their true intent.

The royal will had indeed become impotent. It was now a wheel which had its impetus from outside, instead of imparting a momentum of its own. All the King's power of resistance was reduced to his veto, which could delay for three years any measures not satisfactory to him. Thus certain wheels might come to a dead stop, through their own inability to put themselves in motion. Apart from this restrictive power of inertia, the monarchism, built up by two such mighty sovereigns as Henry the Fourth and Louis the Fourteenth, was now reduced to a condition of majestic inutility.

Meanwhile the day drew nigh when the King was to take his oath in support of the Constitution.

England and the titled refugees wrote to the King :

Perish, if necessary ; but do not degrade yourself by this oath.

Barnave seconded the advice given by the King's brother-in-law, Leopold, — the successor of his brother Joseph on the Austrian throne, — who wrote as follows :

Take the oath ! and let him keep it who can.

At last King Louis decided the question for himself, in this language :

I confess I do not see, in the Constitution, sufficient bonds of unity and action ; but as opinions differ on this subject, I will consent to let experience be the sole judge.

It remained to be decided where the Constitution should be presented to the King for his acceptance, — at the Tuileries or at the Assembly. The King cut short the discussion by announcing that he would take the oath to support the Constitution in the very place where that Constitution had been adopted, the Assembly Hall. The day fixed by the King was September 13.

The Assembly received this communication with unanimous plaudits. The King would come to the Assembly ! In a spurt of enthusiasm Lafayette rose and demanded a general amnesty for all against whom accusations were pending, on account of their participation in the King's flight to Varennes. This amnesty was voted by acclamation.

Thus the cloud which had momentarily darkened the sky for Charny and Andrée was dissipated almost as soon as it gathered.

A deputation of sixty members was appointed to thank the King for his letter. The Keeper of the Seals hastened to prepare the King for this deputation.

The same morning a decree was passed abolishing the Order of the Holy Ghost, four centuries old, but authorizing the King alone to wear its decoration, which had been an emblem of the highest nobility. The deputation found the King ornamented only with the cross of Saint Louis. As he noted the effect produced on the Deputies by the absence of the blue ribbon, the King said: "Gentlemen, you have to-day abolished the Order of the Holy Ghost, yet allowing its decorations to be used by myself alone; but as such insignia have no value in my eyes, except as a means of communicating pleasure and dignity to others, henceforth I shall consider it abolished for myself, as well as for all others."

The Queen, the Dauphin, and Madame Royale were standing near the entrance. The Queen was pale. Her teeth were clinched, and she trembled all over. Madame Royale, already passionate, irritable, and haughty, seemed chiefly impressed with her humiliations, past, present, and anticipatory. The Dauphin, careless as any child, seemed like the one living being in that group of marble, by the cheerfulness and vivacity he imparted to the scene.

As to the King, he said to Montmorin, several days before: "I know very well that I am ruined. Whatever is attempted for royalty in the future must be done for my boy."

His Majesty responded with apparent sincerity to the address of the deputation. At the conclusion he turned to the royal family, and added: "Here are my wife and children, who share my sentiments."

Yes, wife and children shared his *real* sentiments; for

when the deputation retired, and the King followed them with an uneasy and the Queen with a spiteful glance, the royal pair approached each other, and Marie Antoinette said, shaking her head, and laying her hand, cold and white as marble, on the King's arm: "These fellows want no more sovereigns. They are demolishing the monarchy stone by stone, and with those stones they will build us a sepulchre!"

She was mistaken, poor woman! When her time came she was laid on a bier with paupers, and not even allowed to have her own grave. She was not however mistaken in believing the last days of the royal prerogatives had come.

Monsieur de Malouet was President of the Assembly, a Royalist of the purest blood. However, he thought himself obliged to put before the Assembly the question whether the members should stand or be seated while the King was taking the oath.

"Seated! Seated!" was the cry on all sides.

"And the King?" asked Malouet.

"Standing, with head uncovered!" said a voice.

The whole Assembly was startled. That single voice was clear, strong, and vibratory. It sounded like the will of the people, and as if it were uttered by only one voice in order that it might be heard the better.

The President grew pale. Who spoke those words? Came they from the floor of the hall or from the galleries? It mattered not! They contained such power that the President was forced to reply. "Gentlemen, there are no circumstances in which the National Assembly does not recognize the King as chief, when he is present. If the King takes the oath standing, I request the Assembly to listen in the same attitude."

Again the unknown voice made itself heard. "I have

to propose an amendment which will satisfy everybody. Let us ordain that Monsieur de Malouet, and anybody else who prefers that posture, may listen to the King on their knees; but let us vote on the proposition already before us."

The proposition was set aside.

It was on the very day after this discussion that the King was to take his oath. The hall was full. The galleries were crammed with spectators. At noon the King was announced.

The King spoke standing. The Assembly listened standing. His speech being made, they all signed the Constitution, and then everybody sat down.

Then the President — it was Thouret, on this occasion — rose to make his address; but after the first two or three sentences, seeing that the King did not rise, Thouret sat down again.

This action provoked some applause in the galleries. As these plaudits were several times renewed, the King could not help growing pale. He drew his handkerchief from his pocket, and wiped the sweat from his brow.

The Queen was present at the session, in a special seat. She could bear no more, but rose and went out, slamming the door, and returned to the palace. She entered her apartments without a single word, even to her intimate friends. Since Charny was no longer near, her heart absorbed gall, even if she did not send it forth.

The King came home half an hour later, and immediately asked for the Queen. They told him where she was, and an usher wished to show him the way; but Louis sent the usher away by a sign, opened the doors himself, and suddenly appeared on the threshold of the room where he found the Queen. He was so pallid, so cast down, and the perspiration streamed in such great

drops from his face, that when the Queen perceived it she rose and uttered a cry. "Oh Sire, what has happened?"

Without answering, the King threw himself into an armchair and burst into tears. "Oh Madame, Madame! Why did you go to the session to-day? Was it necessary for you to be a witness of my humiliation? Was it for this that I brought you to France, under the pretext of making you its Queen?"

Such an outburst on the part of Louis was as distressing as it was rare. The Queen could not bear it. Running to his side, she fell on her knees before him. At that moment Madame Campan entered. Stretching her arms towards her attendant, the Queen cried: "Oh, leave us, Campan, leave us!"

Madame Campan was not deceived as to the sentiment which made the Queen send her away. She respectfully withdrew; but standing behind the door, she could hear the royal pair for a long time in conversation, interrupted by sobs.

At last the sobs grew calmer and the speakers became silent. In half an hour the door reopened, and the Queen called Madame Campan, and said to her: "Campan, take upon yourself the duty of delivering this letter to Monsieur de Malden. It is addressed to my brother Leopold. Malden will leave at once for Vienna. This letter must be there in advance of the report of what happened at the Assembly to-day. If he needs two or three hundred louis, give them to him, and I will repay you."

Madame Campan took the letter and went out. Two hours later Malden was on his way to Vienna.

Worst of all, it was necessary for the royal family to smile affably, and put on a joyous air.

During all the rest of the day the palace overflowed

with a prodigious crowd. In the evening the whole city sparkled with illuminations. The King and Queen were invited to drive in the Champs Élysées, escorted by the aides and chief officers of the Parisian National Guards.

As soon as they appeared, shouts for the King and Queen were heard on all sides ; but in an interval, when these huzzas ceased and the carriage halted, a ferocious-looking man of the people, standing with folded arms near the carriage steps, said to her : “Don’t believe them ! Hurrah for the Nation !”

The carriage went slowly on again ; but the man of the people laid his hand on the window and walked along beside the carriage. As often as the shouts were renewed for the King and Queen, this man repeated, in the same strident voice : “Don’t believe that ! Hurrah for the Nation !”

After the Queen returned she could hear this speech throbbing incessantly in her heart, like a hammer, smiting her senses with the regularity of hatred and obstinacy.

Special performances were held in the different theatres, — first at the Operahouse, then at the Comédie Française, then at the Italian Theatre. At the Operahouse and at the Comédie Française, everything was arranged for the occasion, and the King and Queen were received with unanimous acclamations ; but when there was an effort to take the same precautions at the Italian, it was too late. All the seats in the parterre (parquet or pit) had been bought in a lump. It was at once understood that at the Italian Theatre things would not be as smooth as they had been at the Operahouse and the Comédie Française, and that there might be a disturbance in the evening.

Fear became certainty when it was seen how the pit

was occupied. Danton, Camille Desmoulins, Legendre, and Santerre occupied front seats. When the Queen entered the royal box (which, as usual in European theatres, was large, and situated in the centre of the main balcony) the boxes and balconies tried to applaud, but the pit hissed.

The Queen looked down with terror into the boiling crater below and in front of her. As through an atmosphere of flame she could see eyes full of anger and indignation ; yet not one man did she know by sight. Indeed, she had scarcely heard their names.

Trying to hide her annoyance by a smile, she asked : " My God, what have I ever done to them, that they should detest me so ? "

Suddenly her glance was arrested by the terrifying sight of a man standing by one of the columns which supported the gallery. That man was gazing at her with painful determination. It was the man whom she had seen at Château de Taverny when she first entered France, at Sevres Bridge on her return from Versailles, in the Tuileries Gardens on the return from Varennes. It was the unknown man, whose words were menaces and whose actions were fearsome mysteries. When her eyes had once rested on this man, she could not turn them aside. He exercised over her the fascination of the serpent over the dove.

The play began. By an effort the Queen broke the charm, and turned her head so as to look at the stage. They were acting "*Les Événements Imprévus*," a now forgotten comic opera in three acts, by Grétry, which had been a dozen years before the public.

Despite every effort made by Marie Antoinette to distract her attention from that mysterious man, she could not avoid turning her awestruck gaze in that direction,

as if attracted towards him by a magnetic influence stronger than her own will. The man was always in the same place, immovable and sardonic, mocking. It was a painful, penetrating, and fatal spell which he exercised over her. What the nightmare is to the sleeper, was this cataleptic influence over one awake and watching.

Besides, a sort of electricity floated through the whole theatre. The opposing influences, though now held in abeyance, could not fail to explode, like two storm-clouds in August, coming from opposite extremes of the horizon, and hurling themselves at each other with lightning and thunder.

At last an occasion presented itself. Madame Dugazon, that charming woman who gave her name to a certain line of girlish and motherly parts in which she excelled, had a duet to sing with the tenor, and in that duet occurred this line :

Oh, how I love my mistress !

The courageous creature advanced to the front of the stage, raised her eyes and her hands respectfully towards the Queen, and uttered this fatal provocation.

The Queen saw that the tempest was upon them. Involuntarily her eyes sought the man at the gallery pillar. She thought she saw him make a sign of command, which was obeyed by all the occupants of the parterre.

As with one awful voice the pittites yelled : "No more masters ! No more mistresses ! Liberty !"

To this yell the galleries and boxes responded : "Long life to the King ! Hurrah for the Queen ! May they live forever, our noble Master and Mistress !"

"No more masters ! No more mistresses ! Liberty ! Liberty !! Liberty !!!" were the answering shouts which arose from the pit.

In this second declaration of war the gauntlet was thrown down and accepted, and the fight began. The Queen screamed and shut her eyes. She had not even force enough left to look at the Unknown, who seemed like the Demon of Disorder, the Spirit of Destruction.

At that instant officers of the National Guard surrounded her, making a living rampart with their bodies, and led her out of the theatre ; but into the corridors the yells followed her : " No more masters ! No more mistresses ! No more kings ! No more queens ! "

She was carried fainting to her carriage, and this was the last time she ever attended a theatre.

On September 30 the Constitution-making Assembly, through President Thouret, declared that having fulfilled its duties, its sessions were ended.

In a few lines here are the results of its work : the complete disorganization of the monarchy ; the organization of the popular strength ; the destruction of all special aristocratic and ecclesiastical privileges ; the issue of twelve hundred millions of francs in assignats, or national paper currency, and the pledge of the national property for the payment of these obligations ; the recognition of religious freedom ; the suppression of the monastic orders ; the abolition of secret imprisonment ; the establishment of equality in official duties ; the discontinuance of interior excise taxes ; the formation of the National Guard ; and finally, the adoption of the Constitution and the submission of the King thereto.

Sorrowful forebodings would have indeed been needed to make the King and Queen of France believe they had more reason to fear the new Assembly, which was about to convene, than the old one, which was just dissolved.

CHAPTER XXII.

BARNAVE'S FAREWELL.

ON October 2, that is to say, two days after the dissolution of the Constitutional Assembly, at the hour when he was accustomed to see the Queen, Barnave was introduced, — no longer into Madame Campan's rooms, on the *entre-sol*, but into the room called the Great Cabinet.

On the evening of the day when the King swore allegiance to the Constitution, Lafayette's aides, and the other sentinels, disappeared from the interior of the palace; and if the King was not restored to power, he was at least restored to freedom. This was some consolation for the humiliation of which he had so bitterly complained to the Queen.

Though he did not undergo the formality of a solemn reception, yet Barnave was no longer subjected to the precautions formerly considered essential whenever he visited the Tuileries.

He was very pale and very sad. This pallor and sadness impressed the Queen. She received him standing; though she knew the young advocate's respect for her, and felt sure that, even if she sat down, he would not repeat the discourtesy of President Thouret, who took his seat when he saw that the King did not rise to listen to the official address.

"Well, Monsieur Barnave, you are doubtless contented, now that the King has followed your advice and sworn to support the Constitution."

"It is very kind of the Queen to say that the King has followed my advice. If this had not also been the advice of the Emperor Leopold and Prince Kaunitz, perhaps his Majesty would have hesitated more over this act, — the only one, however, which could save the King, if the King can —"

Barnave paused ; but, grappling the question before her with that courage — we might call it *audacity* — which was a trait in her character, the Queen took up Barnave's word and said : "If the King *can* be saved ! Is n't that what you mean ?"

"God forbid that I should be the prophet of such evils, Madame ! but in leaving Paris, in going away forever from the Queen, I would neither depress his Majesty's hopes, nor yet leave him too many illusions."

"You are leaving Paris, Monsieur ? You are going away from me ?"

"The labors of the Assembly, of which I was a member, are finished, and as that Assembly has decided that none of its own members are eligible to the Legislature which is to come, I have no longer any reason for staying in Paris."

"Not even the motive of being useful to us, Monsieur Barnave ?"

Barnave smiled gloomily. "Not even that motive, Madame ; for henceforth, dating from day before yesterday, I can no longer be useful to you."

"Oh Monsieur ! you presume too little on your own merits."

"Alas, no, Madame ! I examine myself, and find only feebleness. I weigh myself in the balances, and am found wanting. What gave me force, which I begged the monarchy to use as a lever, was my influence in the Assembly, my leadership among the Jacobins, — my

laboriously acquired popularity ; but the Assembly is dissolved, the Jacobins are transformed into the Feuillants, and I greatly fear the Feuillants sacrificed their last trump when they separated from the Jacobins. — Finally, Madame, my popularity —” Barnave smiled more sorrowfully than before — “my popularity is lost.”

The Queen looked at Barnave, and a strange light, like a flash of triumph, shone in her eyes, as she said : “Well then, you see, Monsieur, that popularity is very short-lived.”

Barnave sighed, and the Queen saw that she had been guilty of one of those little cruelties habitual with her.

Indeed, if Barnave had lost his popularity, if a few months had brought about this result, if he had been forced to bow his head under Robespierre’s dictation, whose was the fault? Was it not the fault of that fatal monarchy, which dragged everything it touched into the destruction to which it was hastening, — to that terrible destiny which transformed Marie Antoinette, as it had transformed Mary Stuart, into a death-angel, whose presence dooms to the grave all those to whom he once appears?

She tried to retrace her steps, well knowing that it was generous in Barnave to respond by a simple sigh, when he might have asked in thundering words: “For whom have I sacrificed my popularity, Madame, if not for you?” and so she said to him: “But you will not really go away, Monsieur Barnave?”

“I will certainly remain, if the Queen so commands. I will remain, as a soldier remains under his flag, that he may guard it in battle, even though he has received his discharge. But if I remain, do you know what will happen? Instead of being feeble, I shall become a traitor.”

"How so, Monsieur?" said the Queen, slightly offended.
"Explain yourself! I don't understand you!"

"Will the Queen permit me to bring her face to face, not merely with her present situation, but with that in which she will soon find herself?"

"Do so, Monsieur! I am accustomed to looking down this precipice, and if I were easily afflicted with dizziness, I should long ago have fallen over it."

"Perhaps the Queen regards the retiring Assembly as hostile."

"Let us distinguish, Monsieur Barnave. In that Assembly I have some friends; but you cannot deny that the majority of its members are hostile to royalty."

"Madame, that Assembly was never guilty of but one act of hostility towards the King and yourself; and that was when the decree was passed that none of its members could take part in the coming Legislature."

"I don't understand you, Monsieur. Explain that to me!" said the Queen, with an incredulous smile.

"It is very plain. The old Assembly has snatched the buckler from the arms of your friends."

"And also, as it seems to me, the sword from the hands of our enemies."

"Alas, Madame, you deceive yourself! This blow comes from Robespierre, and is as terrible as every blow from that man's hand. First of all, in the new Assembly, you will be brought face to face with the unknown. In the Constitutional Assembly you knew what you were fighting, and with whom. With this Legislative Assembly you must begin all over again. Mark this well, Madame! In proposing that none of us should be eligible for re-election, Robespierre meant to put before France this alternative,—of electing to the legislative body either our superiors or else our

inferiors in rank. Now above us, there is nobody left. The aristocratic emigration has disorganized everything ; and even if the nobles were left among us, it is not from among the nobility the people would choose their representatives. The choice must then be from those below us, and there the people must find their new Deputies. Thus the whole Assembly will be democratic. There will be some shades of color in the democracy, that is all."

One could see, by the Queen's face, that she was following Barnave's demonstration with profound attention, and that in proportion as she understood him she was alarmed.

"For three or four days these Deputies have been flowing into Paris, and I have seen some of them, — particularly those sent from Bordeaux. Almost all of them are men without reputation, who are hastening to make themselves a name ; and they are all the more in a hurry because they are so young. Apart from Condorcet, Brissot, and some others, the oldest among them is not over thirty. This onslaught of youth will drive out mature age and dethrone tradition. No more white hair in the Assembly ! but a new France, with black hair !"

"And you believe, Monsieur, we have more to fear from those who come than from those who take their departure ?"

"Yes, Madame ! for the coming legislators are armed with instructions to make war on priests and nobles ! As to the King, no orders have yet been issued in regard to him, but we shall see. If he will rest content with retaining executive power, perhaps the past may be pardoned —"

"How ?" interrupted the Queen. "How ? The past

pardoned? But it will be for the King to pardon, I take it?"

"Yes, certainly; but that is exactly what is no longer understood, Madame. The new-comers — and of this, unhappily, you will soon have abundant proof — will not even keep up the hypocritical conventionalities of their predecessors. To them, — so I have it from a Deputy named Vergniaud, one of my associates from the Gironde, — to them the King seems like an enemy."

"An enemy?" said the astonished Queen.

"Yes, Madame, an enemy. That is to say, voluntarily or involuntarily, he is the watchword of all the Nation's enemies, foreign or domestic. Yes, it must be acknowledged that these new-comers are not all in the wrong; although they think they have discovered a new truth, when their only merit is in crying from the housetops what heretofore your warmest enemies only dared say with bated breath."

"An enemy?" repeated the Queen, — "the King the enemy of his people? Oh, Monsieur Barnave, that is something which you can never make me believe, for you can never make me understand it!"

"Nevertheless it is the truth, Madame! He is an enemy by temperament, an enemy by force of hereditary training! Three days ago he accepted the Constitution, did he not?"

"Yes, indeed!"

"On his return to the palace his Majesty was almost ill with anger, and that evening he wrote to the Emperor."

"But how do you suppose we can possibly bear such humiliations?"

"You cannot avoid seeing the truth! The King is our enemy, — fatally our enemy. He is a voluntary

enemy ; for, having been educated by Monsieur de la Vauguyon, the leader of the Jesuit party, the King places his heart in the hands of priests, who are national enemies. He is also an involuntary enemy, because he is the compulsory chief of the Anti-Revolutionary party. Even if he never quits Paris, his heart is at Coblenz with the emigrants, in the Vendée with the priests, in Vienna or Prussia, with his allies, Leopold and Frederick. The King himself does nothing, — I admit that he does nothing, Madame,” said Barnave, sorrowfully ; “but in default of the King’s personal activity his name is used. In the cottage, in the school, in the château, the Royalists talk of the *poor* King, the *good* King, the *saintly* King, till there are threats of a revolt against the Revolution, — a revolt growing out of pity.”

“Is it really you, Monsieur Barnave, who are saying such things to me ? And yet, were you not the first to pity us ?”

“Oh yes, Madame, I pitied you. Yes, I still pity you, and sincerely ; but there is this difference between myself and those of whom I speak, — that they pity you to your ruin, whereas my pity would lead me to save you.”

“But, Monsieur, among those new-comers, who are to wage a war of extermination against us, — if your representation must be credited, — has any definite plan been agreed upon in advance ?”

“No, Madame, and as yet I can hear only of certain vague schemes, — such as the suppression of the title *Majesty* at the opening of the session, and the use of a plain armchair at the right of the presiding officer, instead of a throne.”

“Do you see in this anything worse than what Monsieur Thouret did, — seating himself because the King was seated ?”

"It is certainly a step ahead, not a step backward. — What is still worse for you, Madame, is that Lafayette and Bailly will be superseded."

"Oh, as to those men," said the Queen, quickly, "I don't regret them!"

"And you are wrong, Madame! Bailly and Lafayette are your friends."

The Queen smiled bitterly.

"Your friends, Madame, — perhaps your last friends! Keep them! If they have any popularity left, use it; but make haste. Their popularity is fast slipping away, like my own."

"After all, Monsieur, you show me the volcano, you lead me to its crater, you tell me of its depths; but you show me no way of avoiding it."

Barnave remained mute for an instant. Then he heaved a sigh, and murmured: "Ah, Madame! why were you arrested on the way to Montmédy?"

"Good!" said the Queen. "Then even you, Monsieur Barnave, approve our Varennes expedition?"

"I did not approve it, Madame; and the situation in which you find yourself to-day is the natural result of that journey; but when I see the fatal consequences of that flight, I deplore its failure."

"So that to-day, you, Monsieur Barnave, a member of the National Assembly, — delegated by that Assembly, with Pétion and Latour Maubourg, to bring back the King and Queen to Paris, — you regret that the royal family did not one and all escape safely to a foreign land?"

"Let us understand each other well, Madame. He who regrets the result is not a member of the National Assembly, is not the colleague of Pétion and Latour Maubourg, but only poor Barnave, who is no longer

anything but your humble servitor, ready to give his life for you, which is all he has now left in the wide world to give."

"Thanks, Monsieur," said the Queen. "The accent with which you make this offer shows you to be a man of your word; but I trust it will never be needful to exact of you such devotion."

"So much the worse for me, Madame!" modestly replied Barnave.

"How? So much the worse?"

"Yes. Taking one downfall with another, I would rather fall in combat, than endure what will happen to me; but in the depths of Dauphiny, where I shall be useless to you, I can only pray for the young and beautiful wife, for the tender and devoted mother, rather than for the Queen. The errors of the past have determined your future. You count on foreign aid, which will not arrive, or will come too late. The Jacobins will grasp the controlling power, either in the Assembly or outside of it. Your friends will quit France, flying from persecution. Those who remain will be arrested, imprisoned. I shall be among those, for I will not flee. Then I shall be tried, condemned. Perhaps my obscure death will be as useless to you as it will be unknown; but if a report of that death perchance reaches you, you will look upon me only as one of your unfortunate helpers, and you will forget the hours when I hoped I might really help you."

"Monsieur Barnave," said the Queen, with great dignity, "I am wholly ignorant what future Fate may have in store for us, — the King and myself; but this I know, that the names of all who have helped us are carefully inscribed in our memories, and that whatever happens to them, whether good or evil fortune, will not be

unknown to us. — Meanwhile, Monsieur Barnave, can we do anything for you now?"

"Much, — you personally, Madame. You can prove to me that I have not been a man wholly without value in your eyes."

"And how can I do that?"

Barnave knelt and said: "By giving me your hand to kiss, Madame."

A tear mounted as far as Marie Antoinette's dry eye-lashes. She extended to the young man her cold white hand, which (with only a year's interval) was thus touched by the most eloquent lips in the Assembly, those of both Mirabeau and Barnave.

Barnave barely swept those fingers with his lips. If he once pressed his mouth to that beautiful marble hand, it was easy to see that the infatuated fellow feared he should lack the power to detach them again.

Then he arose and said: "Madame, I lack the pride which would enable me to say with Mirabeau, *the monarchy is saved*; but this I may say to you: If the monarchy is lost, one will perish with it who can never forget the favor which the Queen has condescended to grant him."

Saluting the Queen, he went out. Marie Antoinette watched his sighing, and when the door closed behind him she said to herself: "Poor squeezed lemon! But little time was needed to reduce thee to an empty rind!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE BATTLEFIELD.

WE have tried to describe the terrible events which took place at the Champ de Mars, on the afternoon of July 17, 1791. Having thus put before the eyes of our readers the drama then performed, in which Bailly and Lafayette were the principal actors, let us now try to depict the scene after the tragedy was over.

A sad spectacle smote the eyes of a young man, clad like an officer of the National Guard, as he came from the Rue Saint Honoré, crossed the river by Pont Louis XV., and so reached the Champ de Mars by way of Rue de Grenelle.

This spectacle, illuminated by the moon, — which had reached two-thirds of its crescent period, and was sailing among dense black clouds, wherein from time to time it was lost, — was indeed lugubrious to look upon.

The Champ de Mars wore the aspect of a battlefield, covered with the dead and wounded, in the midst of whom wandered, like so many ghosts, the men charged with the duty of throwing the dead into the Seine, and of carrying the wounded to the military hospital of Gros Caillou.

The young officer, whom we have followed from Rue Saint Honoré, paused at the entrance of the Champ de Mars, and clasped his hands with an expression of unconscious dread.

“Jesu God!” he murmured, “things were even worse than they told me!”

After watching for a few moments the extraordinary work which was going on, he approached two men, whom he saw carrying a corpse towards the river, and said to them: "Citizens, will you tell me what you are going to do with that man?"

"Follow us, and see!" answered the men; and the young officer did follow them.

When they reached the wooden bridge, the two men swung the body back and forth, as they counted *one, two, three*, and at the third word threw the man into the Seine.

The young officer uttered an exclamation of horror, and asked: "Citizens, what *are* you about?"

"You can see well enough!" responded the two men. "We are clearing the ground."

"And you have orders for doing this?"

"Apparently!"

"From whom?"

"The City!"

The young man uttered an *oh* of stupefaction.

After a moment of silence, while he returned with the bearers to the Champ de Mars, he added: "Have you already thrown many bodies into the Seine?"

"Five or six," responded both men.

"Excuse me, citizens," said the young man, "but I have a great interest in the question which I ask. Among those five or six bodies, was there one of a man forty-six or forty-eight years old, about five feet and five inches tall, — a stocky, vigorous man, half peasant, half tradesman?"

"My faith," said one of the men, "we only notice one thing, — whether the folks lying here are dead or alive. If dead, we throw 'em into the river. If they 're alive, we carry 'em to the Gros Caillou Hospital."

"Ah," said the young man, "I ask, because I have a good friend who has not returned where he belongs; and as I am told that he was here, or has been here part of the day, I'm afraid he may be among the dead or wounded."

"Heavens!" said one of the bearers, shaking a corpse, over which the other held a lantern, "if he was here at all, probably he's here still. If he did n't go home, he probably never will."

Shaking the body at his feet roughly, the city agent cried out: "Halloo! Dead or alive? If not dead, try and answer."

"Oh, as to this fellow, he's dead fast enough," said the second bearer. "He has a ball in the middle of his breast."

"Then ho for the river!" said the first; and the two men lifted the corpse, and started again towards the wooden bridge.

"Citizens," said the officer, "you have no need of your lantern to throw this man into the water. Have the kindness to lend it to me an instant. While you're making your trip, I'll look for my friend."

The bearers consented, and the lantern was handed to the young officer, who carefully began his search, with an expression of countenance which indicated that the titles of respect, bestowed upon the dead or wounded man for whom he was searching, came not from his lips alone, but from his heart.

Ten or a dozen other men, likewise provided with helpful lanterns, were prosecuting a similar funereal investigation.

From time to time, amidst the silence, — for the awful solemnity of the scene, and the sight of the mute dead, seemed to extinguish the voices of the living, — from time to time, amidst the silence, a name was spoken in

a tone so loud that it could be heard across the field. Sometimes a lament, a groan, a cry responded to that call; but oftener the only response was a mournful stillness.

After hesitating awhile, as if his voice were paralyzed by fear, the young officer followed the example of the others, and called out thrice: "Monsieur Billot! Monsieur Billot! Monsieur Billot!" but there was no response.

"He's dead, for sure!" murmured the young man, wiping away with his sleeve the tears which streamed from his eyes. "Poor Father Billot!"

At that moment two other men passed by, carrying another corpse towards the river.

"Hey!" said the one who upheld the shoulders, and was therefore nearer the head, "I believe our body just heaved a sigh."

"Ugh!" said the other, laughing, "if we listened to all these fellows, there wouldn't be a dead man among 'em."

"Citizens!" said the young officer, "by your leave, let me see the man you're carrying."

"Willingly, Monsieur Officer," said the men; and they laid the corpse on its back, so as to enable the young officer's lantern to shine more upon the face. He held the light near it and uttered an exclamation.

Despite the terrible wound which disfigured the body, the searcher thought he recognized the man for whom he was looking; but was he dead or alive?

The head of this man, who was already halfway towards a watery grave, had been laid open by a sabre. The wound, as we have already said, was frightful. Half the hairy flesh had been cut from the left side of the head, and hung over the cheek, leaving bare the skull.

The temporal artery had been severed, so that the whole body of the wounded or dead man was covered with blood. On the side of the cut he was unrecognizable. With a trembling hand the young man held the lantern on the other side, and then cried : " Oh citizens, it's he ! It's the man I'm looking for ! It's Monsieur Billot ! "

" The Devil ! " said the bearers. " Well, he's somewhat damaged, your Monsieur Billot ! "

" Did n't you say he sighed ? "

" I thought I heard him ! "

" Then do me a favor ! " and as he spoke the young officer drew a half-crown from his pocket.

" What is it ? " asked the bearer, filled with good-will at sight of this piece of money.

" Run to the river, and get some water in your hat. "

" With pleasure ! "

While this man ran to the riverside, the young officer took his place, and supported the wounded man.

In five minutes the man was back again.

" Throw some water in his face ! " said the young man.

The bearer obeyed. He dipped his hand into his hat, as if it were a church basin, and shook the water over the wounded face.

" He shivers ! " cried the young man, who still held the wounded man in his arms. " He ain't dead. Oh, dear Monsieur Billot, how lucky I came in time ! "

" Faith, yes ! it was lucky ! " said the man. " Twenty rods more, and your friend would have come to himself in the fishing-nets at Saint Cloud. "

" Sprinkle him again ! "

The bearer did so. The wounded man shuddered and heaved a sigh.

" Well, well ! decidedly he's no dead man ! " said the second bearer.

"Well, what are we going to do about it?" said the first.

"Help me to carry him to Rue Saint Honoré, to Monsieur Doctor Gilbert's, and you'll be well paid!" said the young man.

"We can't!"

"Why?"

"Our orders are to throw the dead into the Seine, and take the wounded to the hospital at Gros Caillou. As this fellow pretends not to be dead, and we can't throw him into the river, we must take him to the hospital."

"Well, let's take him to the hospital as soon as possible!" Looking about him, he added: "Where is the hospital?"

"Three hundred rods off, not far from the École Militaire."

"Then it's over there?"

"Yes!"

"We have to go across the whole Champ de Mars!"

"And farther!"

"My God, have n't you a stretcher or a barrow?"

"Heavens, one can be found, I guess," responded the second bearer. "It's like the water, — with a little silver —"

"That's fair," said the young man, "you've had nothing, have you? Hold on! There's another little crownpiece. Find me a stretcher!"

In ten minutes a stretcher was ready. The wounded man was laid on the canvas. The two bearers bore it by the handles, and the funereal party took up its line of march towards the hospital at Gros Caillou, escorted by the young man, who carried the lantern and steadied the wounded man's head.

It was terrible, that nocturnal march over ground soaked with blood, among cold and rigid bodies, which were disturbed at every step, and among those who tried to raise themselves, and then fell back, begging for help.

At the end of a quarter-hour the party crossed the threshold of the hospital at Gros Caillou.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE HOSPITAL AT GROS CAILLOU.

At that epoch the hospitals, especially military hospitals, were far from being organized as they are to-day. It is not therefore astonishing that disorder reigned in the hospital at Gros Caillou, and that this disorder stood in the way of proper surgical work.

The great demand was for a supply of beds. Mattresses belonging to the inhabitants of the neighboring streets had to be brought into requisition. These mattresses were laid on the floors, and even in the courtyard, and on each mattress was a wounded man, waiting for succor; but surgeons were lacking as well as mattresses, and were more difficult to find.

The officer — in whom our readers have of course recognized their friend Pitou — was able to procure a mattress, as he had obtained a stretcher, by the judicious use of a few more half-crowns; so that Billot was very comfortably lying in the courtyard of the hospital.

Wishing to make the best of his situation, Pitou had his wounded friend placed as near the entrance as possible, in order to intercept the first surgeon who went out or came in. He had a great mind to go through the wards, and compel some physician to help him, cost what it would; but he dared not quit the wounded man. He was afraid lest somebody should throw Billot on the pavement of the courtyard, under the pretext that he was already dead, — as, indeed, one might honestly think.

Pitou had been there an hour, and had stoutly appealed to the two or three surgeons who passed that way, though without winning them to his service, when he saw a man dressed in black, accompanied by two hospital attendants with lights, visiting the beds of agony, one after the other. The nearer this man clad in black came towards Pitou, the more sure the latter felt that he knew him. Soon his doubts ceased, and Pitou ventured to go a few steps towards him, away from the wounded man, and call to the surgeon, with all the strength of his lungs: "Hi! This way! Monsieur Gilbert! Here I am! Here! This way!"

The surgeon, who was indeed Doctor Gilbert, hastened towards him at the sound of this familiar voice.

"Ah, is it thou, Pitou?"

"Oh my God, yes, Monsieur Gilbert."

"Hast thou seen Billot?"

"He's here!" replied Pitou, pointing to the still motionless form beside him.

"Is he dead?" asked the Doctor.

"Alas, dear Monsieur Gilbert, I hope not; but I won't try to hide from you that he don't lack much of it."

Gilbert came near the mattress, and the attendants followed, so as to light up the face of the invalid.

"It's the head, Monsieur Gilbert, it's the head! Poor dear Monsieur Billot! His head is cut open, clear down to his jaw."

Gilbert examined the wound carefully, and said: "The truth is, it's a very serious matter." Then he added, turning to the two attendants: "I must have a separate room for this man, who is one of my friends."

The attendants conferred together, and then said: "There is no separate room, unless it's the laundry."

“Capital!” said Gilbert. “Just the thing. Take him into the laundry!”

They lifted the wounded man as gently as possible, but despite every precaution, a groan escaped him.

“Ah!” said Gilbert, “no cry of joy ever gave me equal pleasure with this groan. He lives! That’s the principal thing.”

Billot was taken to the laundry, and placed on a bed belonging to one of the hospital servants. Then Gilbert began carefully to examine and dress the wounds.

The temporal artery had been cut, and from this had come an immense loss of blood. This loss of blood had led to insensibility; and this lessening of the heart’s pulsations had checked the hemorrhage. Nature had profited by this cessation to form a clot of blood, and this closed up the wounded artery.

With admirable skill Gilbert first tied the artery with a silk thread. Then he washed the flesh and replaced it over the skull. The coolness of the water, and perhaps also some pain arising from the treatment, made Billot open his eyes; and he uttered a few muffled and disconnected words.

“There’s concussion of the brain,” said Gilbert.

“But if he is n’t dead, you can save him, can’t you, Monsieur Gilbert?”

Gilbert smiled sadly. “I shall try; but thou must learn one thing, my dear Pitou, — that Nature is a much better surgeon than any of us.”

Gilbert finished dressing the wound. After the hair was cut off as closely as possible, he brought the two edges of the wound together, secured them in place with bandages of diachylum plaster, and ordered the attendants to place the sick man in almost a sitting position, with his back, and not his head, propped up by the pillows.

It was only when all these duties had been attended to that Gilbert asked Pitou how it happened that he was in Paris; and how, being in Paris, he had managed to be just in the nick of time to rescue Billot.

The matter was very simple. After the disappearance of Catherine and the departure of the farmer, Mother Billot, whom we have never represented to our readers as possessing a very vigorous mind, fell into a sort of apathy, which had been constantly on the increase. She was alive, but it was mechanical life, and every day some new spring in the poor human machine either weakened or broke. By degrees her words became more and more infrequent, till she ended by not talking at all, and even took to her bed. Doctor Raynal declared that only one thing in the world could drag Mother Billot out of this deathly stupor,—the sight of her daughter.

Pitou himself offered to go to Paris at once; or rather he started, without saying anything about it. Thanks to the long legs of our Captain of the Haramont National Guards, the eighteen leagues, which separated the Demoustier region from the capital, were to him but a promenade. He left home at four in the morning, and between seven and eight in the evening he was in Paris.

Pitou seemed destined always to come to Paris when great events were transpiring. On the first trip he came in time to help capture the Bastille. The next time he came in Sebastien's footsteps, on the very day after the royal family had been dragged from Versailles to Paris, by the mob. The third time he came as a delegate, to assist in the Federation of 1790. The last time, the present, his trip was taken on the very day of the massacre in the Champ de Mars.

He found Paris alive with rumors; though, as to that, this was always the condition in which he found Paris.

From the first groups of people he met, he learned what had happened on the Champ de Mars. Bailly and Lafayette had fired on the populace. The populace were cursing Bailly with loud voices. When Pitou was last in Paris these men were adored as deities. Now he found their altars overturned and the men cursed. He absolutely could not understand all this.

What he did understand was, that there had been fighting, massacre, and slaughter in the Champ de Mars, all on account of a Patriotic petition, and that Gilbert and Billot had been there.

Although Pitou, to express it vulgarly, had eighteen leagues in his stomach, he redoubled his speed, and soon reached the Rue Saint Honoré and Gilbert's apartments. The Doctor had returned, but nobody had seen Billot. The Champ de Mars — so said the servant who gave Pitou his other information — was strewn with the dead and wounded. Mayhap Billot, his kind old friend and master, was among them.

The Champ de Mars covered with the dead and wounded! This news did not astonish Pitou less than he had been astonished by the fact that Bailly and Lafayette, those two popular idols, had fired upon the populace.

The Champ de Mars covered with the wounded and dead? Pitou could not picture it to himself! The Champ de Mars which he had helped to level, working with ten thousand comrades, remained in his memory as aglow with illuminations, joyful songs, and gay dances. Covered with the dead and wounded? and all because the people wished to celebrate the second anniversary of the Bastille, as they had celebrated the first anniversary the year before? It was impossible! In one year, how could their motives for joy and triumph have become the

cause of rebellion and massacre? What spirit of vertigo had entered the Parisian head within a twelvemonth?

As we have said before, during the year preceding, thanks to the influence of Mirabeau, thanks to the new club of the Feuillants, thanks to the support of Bailly and Lafayette, — thanks especially to the reaction which followed the return from Varennes, — the Court had regained something of its lost power; and now this power clothed itself in mourning and massacre.

July 17, 1791, was a fearful retaliation for October 5 and 6, 1789.

As Gilbert told the Queen, the populace and royalty stood game to game. It remained to be seen who would win the rubber.

Preoccupied with these ideas, — though not one of them had influence enough to retard his strides, — we have already seen how our friend Ange Pitou, still wearing his uniform as captain of the Haramont National Guards, reached the Champ de Mars, by way of Pont Louis XV. and Rue de Grenelle, just in time to prevent Billot from being thrown into the river, like a dead man.

On the other hand we may remember how Gilbert — after waiting a long time for the Queen, who did not return according to her promise — received an unsigned letter, whose handwriting he recognized as Cagliostro's, and in which he found the following paragraph :

Gilbert, let those two fools slide, who are still derisively called King and Queen, and betake thyself forthwith to the hospital at Gros Caillou. There thou'lt find a dying man, — not so sick as Marie Antoinette and Louis, perchance; but thou mayst perhaps save *him*, whereas *they* cannot be saved, and may pull thee after themselves in their downfall.

As soon as Gilbert learned, through Madame Campan, that the Queen, who had asked him to await her return,

would not come back, and had sent him his dismissal, he at once left the Tuileries, and following almost the same road as Pitou, reached the hospital at Gros Caillou. Aided by two attendants, with their lights, he went from bed to bed, from mattress to mattress, through the halls and corridors, into the vestibule, and even into the courtyard, without finding anybody whom he knew, when suddenly a voice called him by name, and summoned him to the couch of a man half dead. That voice, as we know, was the voice of Pitou. The half-dead man was Billot.

We have described the condition in which Gilbert found the worthy farmer, and his chances for life, — chances both good and bad; but chances in which the worse would have overcome the better, if the wounded man had been under the care of a man less skilful than Doctor Gilbert.

CHAPTER XXV.

CATHERINE.

OF the two persons who Doctor Raynal thought should be notified of the desperate condition of Madame Billot, one, as we know, was confined to his bed, and was a near neighbor to death. This was the husband. The other alone could be present in the distress of the mother's last moments. That was the daughter.

It was necessary to acquaint Catherine with her mother's condition, and with her father's also; but where was Catherine? There was only one way of ascertaining, and that was by applying to the Comte de Charny.

So kindly and hospitably had Pitou been received by the Countess, — when he went to her house in Gilbert's behalf, taking her son thither, — that now he did not hesitate to propose going again to the Rue Coq Héron, to inquire Catherine's whereabouts, though the hour was well advanced into the night.

In fact the clock on the École Militaire had sounded half-past eleven before the surgical treatment was finished, so that Gilbert and Pitou could leave Billot's bedside.

Gilbert commended his patient to the care of the attendants. There was nothing to do except wait for Nature to do her work. Besides, the Doctor would himself be there again the next forenoon.

Pitou and Gilbert took the latter's carriage, which was waiting at the hospital door, and the Doctor ordered the coachman to go to the Rue Coq Héron.

All was dark in that quarter. After ringing for fifteen minutes Pitou tried the knocker, and then he heard the creaking of a door, — not the street door, but the door of the porter's lodge, and a fractious and hoarse voice asked, with an accent of impatience which could not be mistaken : " Who's there ? "

" Me ! " said Pitou.

" Who are you ? "

" Ah, sure enough ! — Ange Pitou, a captain in the National Guard. "

" Ange Pitou ? I don't know him. "

" Captain in the National Guard ! " reiterated Pitou.

" Captain, " repeated the porter, " captain — "

" Captain ! " rejoined Pitou, emphasizing the word ; for he knew the influence of a title.

Indeed the porter began to think that he had to do with at least one of Lafayette's aides, for at that period the National Guard equalled in importance the Royal Army of former days. He consequently came nearer the outer door, and spoke more courteously, though without opening it. " Well, Monsieur Captain, what do you want ? "

" I want to speak with the Comte de Charny. "

" He's not here. "

" With the Countess, then. "

" She ain't here, neither. "

" Where are they ? "

" They went away this morning. "

" In what direction ? "

" To Boursonnes, their country-place. "

" The Devil ! " said Pitou, as if talking to himself.

"Those must have been the folks I passed by at Dam-martin. Probably they were in that postchaise. — If I'd only known it!"

But as Pitou had not known it, he had missed seeing the Count and Countess.

"My friend," said the Doctor, interfering at this point of the conversation, "can't you, in the absence of your employers, give us a little information?"

"Ah, pardon, Monsieur!" said the porter, at once recognizing, by virtue of his aristocratic associations, the voice of a master, in the polite and mild tones which reached his ear. Opening the gate, the good man came forth in his drawers, and with his nightcap in hand. He went at once to the carriage door, to take the Doctor's orders, as servants expressed it in those times.

"What information do you wish, Monsieur?" he asked.

"Do you know a young woman, my friend, in whom the Count and Countess take a great interest?"

"Mademoiselle Catherine?" asked the porter.

"Precisely!" said Gilbert.

"Yes, Monsieur. The Count and Countess have been twice to see her, and have often sent me to ask if she needed anything; but, poor girl! though I don't believe she's rich, — neither she, nor the child which has come to her from the good God, — she always says she does n't need a thing."

At these words about a child, Pitou could not repress a great sigh.

"Well, my friend," said Gilbert, "poor Catherine's father has been wounded to-day in the Champ de Mars; and her mother, Madame Billot, is dying at Villers Cotterets. We must carry her this bad news. Will you give us her address?"

"Oh, poor girl! God help her! She's unhappy enough already! She lives at Ville d'Avray, Monsieur, in the main street. I can't tell you positively the number, but it's opposite a fountain."

"That's near!" said Pitou. "I'll find it!"

"Thanks, my friend!" said Gilbert, slipping a six-franc piece into the porter's hand.

"I don't need anything for that, Monsieur," said the old man. "Please God, Christians ought to be willing to help one another."

The porter bowed very respectfully to the Doctor, and went back into his lodge.

"Well?" said Gilbert, turning to Pitou.

"Well," said Pitou, "I'm off for Ville d'Avray." Pitou was always ready to go anywhere.

"Knowest thou the road?" asked the Doctor.

"No, but you can tell me."

"Thou hast a heart of gold and muscles of steel!" said Gilbert, laughing. "But come and get some rest, and go to-morrow morning."

"But if time presses —?"

"There is no such haste required in either case," said the Doctor. "Billot's condition is serious; but, unless there is some unforeseen accident, he is not at death's door. As to Mother Billot, she may live ten or twelve days."

"Oh, Monsieur Doctor! When she was put to bed, day before yesterday, she did n't talk, she did n't move. Nothing seemed alive but her eyes."

"Nevertheless I know what I'm talking about, Pitou; and I'll be answerable for her, as I say, for ten or a dozen days."

"Well, Monsieur Gilbert, you know better than I do!"

"It's best to leave poor Catherine another night of restful ignorance. For the unhappy, a good night's sleep is very important, Pitou."

Pitou yielded to the force of this reasoning and asked :
"Well, then, where shall we go, Monsieur Gilbert?"

"To my place, and thou shalt have thy old chamber."

"Well," said Pitou, smiling, "it'll give me pleasure to see it again."

"And to-morrow," continued Gilbert, "at six o'clock in the morning, the horses will be all harnessed."

"Why have the horses harnessed?" asked Pitou, who always regarded horses as articles of luxury.

"To take thee to Ville d'Avray."

"Good!" said Pitou. "Is it fifty leagues from Paris to Ville d'Avray?"

"No, only two or three," replied Gilbert; and as he spoke there passed before his eyes, in the light of youth, the walks he used to take in the woods of Louveciennes, of Meudon, and of Ville d'Avray, with his old teacher, Rousseau.

"Well, then," said Pitou, "it's only a matter of an hour, three leagues, and I'll gobble it down like an egg."

"But Catherine! Dost fancy she also can gobble them down like an egg, those three other leagues, from Ville d'Avray to Paris, and the eighteen leagues from Paris to Villers Cotterets?"

"True!" said Pitou. "Excuse me for being such a fool, Monsieur Gilbert. — By the way, how goes it with Sebastien?"

"Marvellously well. Thou'lt see him to-morrow."

"Still with Abbé Bérardier?"

"Still there!"

"So much the better, for I shall be so glad to see him."

“And he also to see thee, Pitou ; for, like myself, he loves thee with all his heart.”

Just as these words were spoken, the Doctor and Ange Pitou stopped at the door in the Rue Saint Honoré.

Pitou slept with all his heart, — as he walked, as he ate, as he fought ; only, owing to his country habit of rising very early, he was up by five o'clock.

At six the carriage was ready. At seven he knocked at Catherine's door. It had been agreed with Doctor Gilbert that at eight they should be at Billot's bedside.

Catherine opened the door, and cried out at the sight of Pitou : “Ah, my mother is dead !” and then grew pale, and supported herself against the wall.

“No,” said Pitou ; “only, if you wish to see her before she dies, you must make haste, Mademoiselle Catherine.”

This interchange of words, wherein so many things were said in a few sentences, dispensed with all preliminaries, and placed Catherine face to face with her misfortune at a single bound.

“Then there's another trouble,” continued Pitou.

“What is it ?” asked Catherine, with the brusque and almost indifferent tone of one who fears no additional sorrow, having borne already her full share of human woe.

“Monsieur Billot was dangerously wounded yesterday, on the Champ de Mars.”

“Ah !” was all she said, evidently less sensitive to this misfortune than to the other.

“Then here's what I says to myself,” said Pitou, “and this was also Doctor Gilbert's opinion : Mademoiselle Catherine must make a passing visit to Monsieur Billot, at the Gros Caillou Hospital, and then take the stage to Villers Cotterets.”

“And you, Monsieur Pitou?”

“Me? Well, as you must go to your mother’s death-bed, I think I ought to stay here and try to help Monsieur Billot to get well. I will remain with him; for he has nobody else, you understand, Mademoiselle Catherine.”

Pitou uttered these words with angelic ingenuousness, not dreaming that therein he was revealing the whole history of his devotion.

Catherine offered him her hand. “Yours is a brave heart, Pitou. Come in, and embrace my poor Isidore.”

She led the way, for the short scene we have described took place in the alley-way of the house, by the street door. She was as beautiful as ever, poor Catherine, clad in full mourning as she was; and this drew a fresh sigh from Pitou.

Catherine preceded him into a little chamber, opening into the garden. In that chamber, which, with a kitchen and toilet-closet, comprised Catherine’s lodging, there were a bedstead and a cradle, — the bed for the mother, and the cradle for her child.

The infant was asleep. Catherine pulled away a gauze curtain, and stood aside, so that Pitou could see into the cradle.

“Oh, the beautiful little angel!” said Pitou, clasping his hands; and as if the babe were really an angel, he knelt and kissed its hand.

Pitou was speedily repaid for what he did. He felt Catherine’s hair float over his face, and two lips were pressed upon his forehead. The mother was paying back the kiss given to her boy.

“Thank you, good Pitou!” she said. “Since the last kiss he received from his father, nobody else has kissed the poor little thing, except his mother.”

“ Oh, Mademoiselle Catherine ! ” stammered Pitou, dazzled and shaken up by the young girl’s kiss, as if by an electric spark ; yet this kiss came purely from the holy and grateful love of a mother’s heart.

It was not the kiss of a sweetheart, a passionate woman, or even of a loving friend. It was a sacred, a divine kiss, and in this light did our honest and unselfish Pitou receive it ; though it nevertheless vibrated in his heart, his brain, and throughout his stalwart form, touching the life-centres of his being, and toning them to ecstatic harmony.

What is so strong, so wide, so deep, so penetrating as mother-love ? It distances all the other affections of this world, and is excelled only by the infinite and creative love of Heaven, to which it is akin.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE DAUGHTER AND THE FATHER.

TEN minutes later Catherine, Pitou, and little Isidore were rolling along the road to Paris in Doctor Gilbert's carriage. The carriage stopped in front of the hospital at Gros Caillou. Catherine dismounted, took her babe in her arms, and followed Pitou.

At the door of the laundry she paused and said: "You say we shall find Doctor Gilbert by father's bedside?"

"Yes," said Pitou, half opening the door, "and there he is!"

"See if I can go in without exciting him too much."

Pitou entered the room, questioned the Doctor, and at once came back after Catherine. "The shock — so says Monsieur Gilbert — was so great that as yet he recognizes nobody."

Catherine was about to enter, with little Isidore in her arms, when Pitou said: "Give me your baby, Mademoiselle Catherine!"

Catherine hesitated a moment; but Pitou said: "Oh, give him to me! Then it will seem as if you had never been away from your father!"

"You are right!" said Catherine; and with more confidence, perhaps, than if he had been her brother, she placed her babe in Pitou's arms. Then, with a firm step, she went into the room, and straight to her father's bedside.

As we have said, Doctor Gilbert was at the head of the wounded man's bed. There was little change in the condition of the patient. His back was supported by pillows, as on the evening before; and with the aid of a wet sponge, which he gently squeezed, the Doctor was moistening the bandages which held the wounded parts in place. In spite of the beginning of a well-defined inflammatory fever, Billot's face wore a deathly pallor, on account of the quantity of blood he had lost, the inflammation being visible only in the eye and part of the left cheek.

At the first feeling of coolness he babbled and rolled his eyes; but his words were lost in that sleepiness which physicians call *coma*, and his eyes straightway closed again.

When Catherine reached her father's bedside she fell on her knees, and said, raising her hands to Heaven: "My God, bear witness that from the bottom of my heart I pray for my father's life!"

That was as much as the daughter could ask for the father who had intended to kill her lover.

At the sound of her voice a shudder ran through the sick man's frame. His respiration became more labored. He again opened his eyes. His glance—after wandering about a little, as if to see whence came the voice—fixed itself on Catherine. His hand moved, as if to repel the apparition, which he doubtless mistook for a feverish vision.

The girl's glance met her father's; and with a sort of terror Gilbert saw these flaming glances clash against each other like two lightning-flashes of hate, rather than meet like two rays of affection.

Then the girl rose to her feet, and went out as deliberately as she had entered. She found Pitou on all-fours,

playing with Baby. Catherine took her little one again, with the violence of the lioness rather than the woman, and cried, as she pressed the babe to her breast: "My child, — oh, my child!"

In this cry was all the agony of the mother, all the grief of the widow, all the sorrow of the woman.

Pitou wished to accompany Catherine as far as the office of the stage, which was to leave at ten in the forenoon; but she refused his offer, in these words: "No! As you have well said, your place is near one who is all alone. Stay here, Pitou!" and she pushed Pitou back into the laundry.

When Catherine commanded, Pitou had no choice or wish but to obey.

As Pitou approached the bed, Billot was roused by the noise made by the somewhat heavy step of the Captain of the Haramont National Guard. He once more opened his eyes, and an expression of good-will chased from his countenance the imprint of hatred, — which, like a tempestuous cloud, had come over it at the sight of his daughter.

Catherine descended the staircase with her babe in her arms, and took her way through the Rue Saint Denis to the Hôtel du Plat d'Étain, which was the starting-point for the diligence which ran to Villers Cotterets.

The horses were already harnessed and the postilion in his saddle. There was one seat left inside, and that Catherine took.

Eight hours later, at six in the afternoon, — while it was still daylight, — the stage drew up at the Rue Soissons.

If Isidore had still been alive, and the young girl had come to see her mother in good health, Catherine would have been led by a sense of shame to let the stage leave

her at the end of Rue Lagny, and then would have made the circuit of the village, so as not to be seen; but as a widowed mother she paid no heed to rural raillery,—or rather she did not think of it. So she left the diligence modestly, but unabashed. Her mourning made her resemble a sorrowful angel, from whom scorn and malice must surely be averted by that smiling angel, her babe.

Catherine was not readily recognized. She was so pale and so altered, that she no longer seemed like the same woman. More misleading than her looks was the air of distinction which had come to her insensibly, through intimate association with a high-bred gentleman like Isidore.

However, one person recognized her, while she was still some distance away. This was Aunt Angelica.

Aunt Angelica was at the townhouse gate, conversing with two or three gossips about the oath demanded of the priests. She said that she had heard Abbé Fortier declare that he would never take the oath of allegiance to the Jacobins or the Revolution, but that he would submit to martyrdom rather than bend his head beneath the Revolutionary yoke.

“Oh Jesus God!” she cried suddenly, interrupting her story, “if there ain’t that Billot girl and her young one, getting out of the stage!”

“Catherine?—Catherine?” repeated several voices.

“Yes indeed! See! There she is, shying up that lane!”

Aunt Angelica was mistaken. Catherine was not striving to get out of sight; but she was in haste to be near her mother, and so walked rapidly; and she chose the lane because it afforded a far shorter cut than the highway.

When they heard Aunt Angelica's remark, "It's that Billot girl!" and the exclamations of the other women, that it was Catherine, several children started to run after the girl; and when they overtook her they cried out: "Yes, yes, it's true! It's Mademoiselle!"

"Yes, children, it's I!" said Catherine, pleasantly.

As she was always a favorite with the children, especially as she always had something for them, — a caress, if nothing more, — they shouted, "Good-day, Mademoiselle Catherine!"

"Good-day, my friends," she replied. "My mother is not dead yet, is she?"

"Oh, no, Mademoiselle, not yet!" they said; and then one child added: "Monsieur Raynal says she may last eight or ten days longer."

"Thank you, children!" said Catherine; and she kept on her way, after giving them a few coins.

The children ran back again to the square, and the gossips said to them, "Well —?"

"Well, it *is* she!" said the children; "and that's sure, for she asked us about her mother! and see what she gave us!" and the children exhibited the pieces of money received from Catherine.

"Her goods must bring a big price in Paris," said Aunt Angelica, "if she can afford to give silver to all the brats who run after her."

Aunt Angelica did not love Catherine Billot. Catherine was young and handsome, while Aunt Angelica was old and homely. Catherine was tall and well-formed, while Aunt Angelica was short and lame.

Then again, it was at Billot's farm that Ange Pitou had found a shelter, when his aunt drove him away from her home.

Besides, it was Billot who read the Declaration of

Human Rights on that never-to-be-forgotten Federation Day, nearly two years before, and hustled Abbé Fortier, to make him say Mass at the Patriot Altar, in the square.

All these reasons sufficed, especially when added to the natural acidity of her disposition, to make Aunt Angelica dislike the Billots in general and Catherine in particular; and when Aunt Angelica hated, she hated vigorously, like all religious devotees.

She hastened speedily to find Mademoiselle Adelaide, the niece of Abbé Fortier, and tell her the news.

The priest was enjoying a fine carp from the Wallue pond, flanked by a dish of scrambled eggs and a plate of spinach. It was a maigre day, and the priest had put on the ascetic and severe aspect of a man who expects to be martyred every instant.

"What is it?" he inquired, hearing the women jabbering in the entry. "Are they after me, to make me avow my unalterable loyalty to God's name?"

"Not yet, my dear uncle," said Mademoiselle Adelaide. "No, it's only Aunt Angelica," — for everybody, following Pitou's example, called the old maid by this title, — "it's only Aunt Angelica, who has come to tell me the latest scandal."

"We live in an era when scandal runs abroad in the streets," responded Father Fortier. "What is the latest scandal which Aunt Angelica brings you?"

Mademoiselle Adelaide introduced Aunt Angelica, who, it will be remembered, had the business of letting chairs to the worshippers at the village chapel, — as is customary in Catholic churches in Europe; where there are no pews, such as are provided in Protestant churches, especially in England and America.

"Your servitor, Monsieur!" said the old maid.

"You should say *servant*, Aunt Angelica," said the priest, who could never quite throw aside his pedagogical habits.

"I've always heard folks say *servitor*," said Aunt Angelica, "and I only repeat what I've heard. Excuse me if I've offended, Monsieur Abbé."

"You don't offend *me*, Aunt Angelica, but *syntax*!"

"I'll make my excuses to Monsieur Syntax the first time I see him," humbly replied the old woman.

"Very well, Aunt Angelica, very well! Now won't you have a glass of wine?"

"Thanks, Monsieur Abbé, but I never drink wine."

"You are wrong. Wine is not forbidden by the rules of the Church."

"Oh, it ain't because wine is disallowed that I don't drink it. It's because it costs nine sous a bottle."

"You are still penurious then, Aunt Angelica?" asked the priest, turning around in his chair.

"Oh, my God, Monsieur Abbé! Penurious? How can poor folks help it?"

"Go along, you poor woman! — getting the chair-rental for nothing, when I might get a hundred crowns for it from the first applicant!"

"Oh, Monsieur Abbé, how could anybody pay that? Why, I can only afford water to drink, though I do get the chair business for nothing."

"That's why I offer you a glass of wine, Aunt Angelica."

"Take it!" said Mademoiselle Adelaide. "It will displease my uncle if you don't accept his offer."

"You think he'll be provoked, your uncle?" said Aunt Angelica, who was dying to accept.

"Most certainly!"

"Then, Monsieur Abbé, you may give me two fingers'

worth of wine, if you please, for I would n't disoblige you."

"Here you are, then!" said he, filling a glass to the brim with burgundy as pure as rubies. "Swallow that, Aunt Angelica; and when you next count your crowns, you'll think you have twice as many."

As Aunt Angelica raised the glass to her lips she said: "My crowns? Ah, Monsieur Abbé, don't talk to me in such a way, — you, a priest of the good God, — you who stand between the living and the dead, as they say."

"Drink, Aunt Angelica, drink!"

Aunt Angelica moistened her lips with the wine, as if to please the priest, and then, shutting her eyes tight, she beatifically swallowed nearly a third of the contents of the glass.

"Oh, how strong!" she said. "I don't see how anybody can drink wine clear!"

"And I," said the priest, "don't see how anybody can put water into his wine; but never mind that! You can't prevent me from betting that Aunt Angelica has a pretty plum of a fortune laid away!"

"Oh Monsieur Abbé, Monsieur Abbé, don't say such things. I can't even pay my taxes, which are three francs ten sous [about seventy cents] a year!" and Aunt Angelica swallowed another third of the contents of her glass.

"Yes, I know you say so; but if I'm not greatly mistaken, when the day comes for you to give up your soul to God, if your nephew, Ange Pitou, hunts about carefully, he'll find, in some old stocking or other, enough money to buy the whole of the Rue Pleux."

"Monsieur Abbé, Monsieur Abbé!" cried Aunt Angelica, "if you say such things you'll get me assassinated by some of those brigands who burn up barns and cut

down the crops ; for on the word of a holy man like you, they 'll believe I'm rich. — Oh Lord, oh Lord, what a misfortune !” and with her eyes moist with tears of satisfaction she swallowed the rest of her wine.

“ Well, well,” said the priest, still in a jesting mood, “ you see you can get used to this nice little wine, Aunt Angelica.”

“ All the same,” said the old maid, “ it 's awful strong !”

Having finished his supper the abbé said : “ Well, now, what new scandal is troubling our Israel ?”

“ Monsieur Abbé, that Billot girl came home in the stage from Paris, with her baby.”

“ Ah ha ! Why I supposed she would put it into the Foundling Hospital.”

“ And she would do well,” said Aunt Angelica, “ for then the poor little thing would n't have to blush for its mother.”

“ Indeed,” said the priest, “ that 's putting the institution in a new light. — And what does she come here after ?”

“ It appears she comes to see her mother, for she asked some children if her mother were still alive.”

“ You know, Aunt Angelica, that Mother Billot has neglected the sacrament of confession,” said the priest, with a malicious smile.

“ Oh Monsieur Abbé,” replied Aunt Angelica, “ that is n't her fault ! The poor woman has been losing her wits for the past three or four months, as it seems ; but before her daughter gave her so much trouble she was a very devout woman, one who feared God ; and when she came to church she always hired two chairs of me, — one to sit upon, and the other to put her feet on.”

“ And her husband,” asked the priest, his eyes fairly

glistening with anger, "*Citizen* Billot, the captor of the Bastille, — how many chairs did he hire of you?"

"Well, I don't know!" answered Aunt Angelica, simply. "He never did come to church! But as to Mother Billot —"

"Well, well," said the priest, "there's an account to be settled when she's buried!"

Then he added, making the sign of the cross: "Return thanks with me, my sisters."

The old maids also made the sign of the cross, and devoutly said their prayers with him.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE DAUGHTER AND THE MOTHER.

MEANWHILE Catherine kept on her way. On leaving the lane she turned to the left, went through the Rue de Lormet, at the end of which she re-entered the main road to Pisseleu, by a narrow footpath through the woods.

All along this road mournful memories were aroused in Catherine's mind. To begin with, there was the little wooden bridge where Isidore bade her farewell, on the day when Pitou found her by the roadside, in a cold and frigid swoon. At the entrance of the farmhouse was the hollow willow-tree, where Isidore had secretly deposited his letters. Drawing nearer the house, she could see the little window by which Isidore gained access to her room, — the very place where the young man would have more speedily ended his career, on the very night when she left her home, if the farmer's gun had not luckily missed fire. Finally, in front of the great door of the farmhouse was the main road to Boursonnes, which Catherine had so often traversed, and which she knew so well, — the road by which Isidore used to come to the farm.

How many times by night, leaning against that window, her eyes fixed on that highway, had she breathlessly awaited his arrival, till at last she could perceive her lover, — always punctual and faithful, stealing along in the shadows, — and felt a great burden lifted from her breast, as she opened her arms to receive him.

And now he was dead ; but when her arms met across her breast they pressed his babe to her heart. What were people saying about her dishonor and shame ? Could such a beautiful child ever be a shame and dishonor to its mother ?

Fearlessly and quickly she went into the house. A great dog began to bark ; but suddenly he recognized his young mistress, came as near her as the length of his chain would permit, and rose with his paws in the air, whining joyfully.

At the barking of the dog a man appeared in the doorway, desirous of knowing what was the matter. "Mademoiselle Catherine !" he exclaimed.

"Father Clouis !" said Catherine.

"Welcome, my dear young lady !" said the old game-keeper. "The house sadly needs your beautiful and cheerful presence !"

"And my poor mother ?"

"Alas ! — neither better nor worse ! — or rather worse than better. She is sinking, poor dear soul !"

"And where is she ?"

"In her chamber."

"All alone ?"

"No, no, no ! — oh no, I would n't have that ! You must excuse me, Mademoiselle, if in your absence, and everything, I have somewhat made myself master here. The time you spent in my poor hut made me feel like one of the family. I loved you so much, — you and that poor Monsieur Isidore !"

"You know — ?" said Catherine, drying a few tears.

"Yes, yes ! — killed for the Queen, like Monsieur George ! But then, he has left you this beautiful child, — is n't it so ? Though you weep for the father, you must smile for the child."

"Thanks, Father Clouïs!" said Catherine, offering her hand to the old gamekeeper; "but my mother—?"

"She's there in her chamber, as I told you, with Madame Clement, — the same sick-nurse who took care of you."

"And has she her senses still, my poor mother?" asked Catherine, hesitatingly.

"There are times when we think so," said Father Clouïs; "and that's when somebody speaks your name. That's the way we roused her the day before yesterday; but since then she has made no sign of recognition, even when we speak of you."

"Let's go in, Father Clouïs!" said Catherine.

"Enter, Mademoiselle!" said the old gamekeeper, opening the door into Madame Billot's bedroom.

Catherine looked into the room. Her mother was lying in a bed surrounded by green serge curtains. The room was lighted by one of those old-fashioned lamps with three tubes, still to be found in ancient farmhouses.

The invalid was being cared for by Madame Clement, as Father Clouïs had said. The nurse was nodding in a big armchair, in that somnolent state peculiar to nurses, which is a somnambulist condition, midway between waking and sleeping.

Poor Mother Billot seemed little changed, except that her skin was the color of ivory. She seemed to be asleep.

"Mother, mother!" cried Catherine, throwing herself on the bed, as the nurse took the baby.

The invalid opened her eyes, and moved her head towards Catherine. An intelligent gleam came into her face. Her lips babbled some unintelligible sounds, which did not even reach the dignity of disconnected

words. She put out her hand, as if to confirm, by the sense of touch, her almost extinguished hearing and eyesight; but the effort was abortive, the motion a failure. The eyes closed again. The arm rested like a dead weight on Catherine's head, who was on her knees by her mother's bedside; and the invalid relapsed into that insensibility from which she had been momentarily roused by her daughter's voice, as by a galvanic shock.

Like two lightning flashes coming from opposite quarters of the horizon, so Catherine's father and mother sent out contrary emotions from their respective conditions of lethargy. Father Billot emerged from his swoon as if to repulse Catherine far from him. Mother Billot emerged from her torpor as if to draw Catherine nearer to herself.

Catherine's arrival revolutionized things at the farm. Billot had been expected, but not his daughter. She described the accident which had happened to Billot, and told them that the husband was as near death in Paris as was the wife at Pisseleu; only it was evident that the two dying persons were on different roads, — Billot on the road from death to life, his wife on the road from life to death.

Catherine once more entered her maiden chamber. There were many tears for her in the remembrances recalled by that little bedroom, where she had indulged in the sweet dreams of childhood, the burning affection of maidenhood, and to which she now returned with the bruised heart of the widow.

At once she assumed, in the disordered household, the authority which her father had aforetime delegated to her, even to the neglect of her mother. With thanks and recompense Father Clouïs returned to his burrow, as he called the hut at Clouïse Rock.

The next day Doctor Raynal came to the farm. He was accustomed to pay a professional visit every other day, inspired by a sense of duty rather than hope. He knew that nothing he could do would be of any avail, and that Mother Billot's life, like a lamp from which the oil is exhausted, could not be prolonged by any human effort. He was right glad to find the daughter there. At once he broached a question which he would not have dared debate with Billot, — the question of the sacraments of Holy Church.

Billot, as everybody knew, was an extreme disciple of Voltaire ; nor was the Doctor's religious devotion exemplary. On the contrary, to the skeptical spirit of the age, the Doctor added what would now be called the scientific temper. Though the age had only reached the stage of doubt, science was already at the point of negation. Nevertheless, under such circumstances as these, he considered it his duty to speak to the family on the subject.

Pious relatives usually profited by his notice to send for the priest ; while unreligious relatives gave orders, if the priest should present himself, that the door should be slammed in his face.

Catherine was pious. She wholly ignored the dissensions which had taken place between Billot and Fortier, or rather she attached no great importance to this antagonism. She sent Madame Clement to the rectory to ask the pastor to come and administer the last sacraments to her mother. Being too small a hamlet for a separate chapel and curate, Pisseleu relied upon Villers Cotterets for its sacred offices. It was even in the cemetery of Villers Cotterets that the dead of Pisseleu were buried.

An hour afterward the bell of the viaticum was heard tinkling at the farmhouse door. The priest had come to

administer the sacrament of Extreme Unction. The advent of the Sacred Host was welcomed by Catherine on her knees.

Hardly had the abbé entered the chamber, hardly did he perceive that she for whose benefit he had been summoned was speechless, sightless, voiceless, before he declared that he would not give absolution except to those who were able to make their confession before receiving the holy wafer ; and, in spite of every request, he carried the pyx away.

Fortier was a priest of the gloomy and fanatical type. In Spain he might have been a Saint Dominic, and in Mexico a Valverde. It was useless to appeal to any other priest. Pisseleu was in his parish, and no other curate would dare encroach upon his rights.

Catherine's heart was pious and tender, but she was also very rational. She looked upon the refusal of the abbé only as a burden she must bear, hoping that God would be more indulgent than his minister to the poor dying woman.

She continued to discharge the duties of a daughter towards her mother, and the duties of a mother to her child, dividing her whole life between the young soul, newly entering into this world, and the weary one who was leaving it. For eight days and nights she only left her mother's bed when called to her infant's cradle.

During the eighth night, as the girl was still watching by the bed of the invalid, — who, like a bark foundering in the sea, was gradually being submerged in eternity, — the door of the chamber opened, and Pitou appeared on the threshold. According to his usual habit he had left Paris that morning.

When she saw him Catherine trembled. For an instant she feared lest her father was dead ; but Pitou's face,

without being precisely gay, did not belong to a bearer of fatal intelligence.

In point of fact Billot was going from better to best. For several days the Doctor had felt sure of his case. On the very morning of Pitou's departure the farmer had been transported from the hospital at Gros Caillou to the Doctor's residence. As soon as Billot was out of danger, Pitou announced his resolution of returning to Pisseleu. He was no longer troubled on Billot's account, but on Catherine's. Pitou foresaw what would happen when they should tell Billot, what as yet it had not been considered safe for him to know, about the condition of his wife. Pitou was sure that Billot, feeble as he still was, would start for home. What if he should find Catherine at the farm?

Doctor Gilbert had not concealed from Pitou the effect produced upon the wounded man by the entrance of Catherine into the hospital laundry, and her brief stay at her father's bedside. Evidently this vision remained in the depths of his soul; and when he awoke to renewed life, he remembered her advent as part of a disordered dream. As reason slowly returned, he cast about him anxious and hateful glances. Doubtless he expected to see the painful vision reappear.

Not a word did he say about it, however, not once did he utter Catherine's name; yet Doctor Gilbert was too profound an observer not to read or conjecture everything. As soon therefore as Billot was convalescent he sent Pitou back to the farm.

This was for the purpose of getting Catherine out of the way. Pitou would have two or three days in which to bring this about, as not for two or three days longer would the Doctor risk the announcement of the painful information brought to Paris by Pitou the week before.

All this was imparted to Catherine by Pitou, with all the deferential fear inspired in him by Billot's character ; but Catherine declared that she would not go away without closing the dying woman's eyes, even if her father wished to kill her beside her mother's pillow.

Pitou sadly lamented this determination, but he could not find a word to say against it. He could only hold himself ready to interpose, in case of need, between father and daughter.

Two more days and nights rolled away. During these two days and nights Mother Billot's life seemed to steal away, breath by breath. For ten days she had eaten nothing. They could only sustain life by occasionally introducing a spoonful of syrup into her mouth. One could hardly believe life could be retained in the body by so little sustenance ; and certainly the poor woman was barely alive.

During the tenth night, when the breath had apparently forsaken her body, the invalid suddenly appeared to revive. Her arms moved. Her lips were agitated. Her eyes opened into a full stare.

"Mother ! mother !" cried Catherine ; and she rushed to the door to get her babe.

One might say that Catherine bore with her the mother's very soul ; for when she returned, holding little Isidore in her arms, the dying woman made an effort to turn in that direction. Her eyes remained open and staring ; but there was a gleam of welcome therein for the returning daughter. She even extended her arms and uttered a moan.

Catherine fell on her knees, as she placed her son on the bed.

Then occurred a strange phenomenon. Mother Billot lifted herself from her pillow, and laid her hands on the

heads of Catherine and her babe. Then, with such an effort as was made by the youthful son of Crœsus, who broke through his dumbness in a moment of peril, this dying mother ejaculated: "My children, I bless you!" and then fell back on her pillow, her arms lifeless and her voice mute.

She was dead. Her eyes only remained open, as if the poor woman, not having seen enough of her daughter while living, wished to gaze at her from beyond the grave.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IN WHICH THE ABBÉ FORTIER PUTS INTO EXECUTION THE
THREAT MADE TO AUNT ANGELICA IN REFERENCE TO
MOTHER BILLOT.

CATHERINE piously closed her mother's eyes, first with her fingers and then with her lips.

Madame Clement had long anticipated the last sad hour, and provided some candles. While Catherine, full of tears, carried her crying child into her own chamber, and lulled him to sleep on her bosom, Madame Clement lighted two candles on each side of the head of the bedstead, crossed the hands of the dead woman over her breast, placed a crucifix between those lifeless fingers, and set a bowl of consecrated water on a chair, with a spray of boxwood kept over from the previous Palm Sunday.

When Catherine came back, the only pious duty left for her was to kneel beside the deathbed, with her prayer-book in her hands.

Meanwhile Pitou took upon himself the care of the burial arrangements. Not liking to go personally to Abbé Fortier, with whom there had been so much unpleasantness, he went to the sexton, to order a Mass for the dead, to the bearers, to let them know at what hour they would be needed, and to the gravedigger, to tell him to dig the grave.

Thence he went to Haramont, in order to notify his lieutenants, and the other thirty and one members of the

Haramont National Guards, that the interment of Madame Billot would take place the next day at eleven o'clock.

As Mother Billot had never in her life occupied any public position, and held no rank in the Royal Army or the National Guard, Pitou's communication to his soldiery was perhaps officious, but certainly not official, — as may be readily understood. It was an invitation, not a command, to assist at the funeral.

However, it was but too well known how much Billot had done for the Revolution, which had turned the public brain and inflamed the general heart. It was known that he was couched on a bed of pain at that very moment, and not wholly out of danger, and that he had been wounded in defence of the holy cause of Liberty. Pitou's invitation, therefore, had all the force of a command. All the Haramont Guards promised their chief that they would willingly be on hand the next day at eleven, promptly and punctually, at the bereaved home.

As Pitou returned to the farm that night, he met the undertaker at the door, carrying the coffin on his shoulder. Intuitively Pitou possessed a delicacy of heart rarely found among peasants, or even among the higher classes. He placed the undertaker and his coffin in the stable, and went into the house alone, fully determined to spare Catherine the sight of this mournful box and the painful noise of the hammer.

Catherine was praying at the foot of her mother's bed. The pious care of the two women had already washed the dead, wrapped her in her shroud, and made her ready for the last rites.

Pitou gave Catherine his account of what had been done during the day, and invited her to go out for a

little air; but she refused, wishing to discharge her filial duties to the very end.

"It will be bad for your dear little Isidore, if you don't go out," said Pitou.

"Then *you* may take him out and give him the air, Monsieur Pitou."

She must have had great confidence in Pitou, or she would not have trusted him with her babe, even for five minutes.

Pitou went out, as if to obey her orders; but he was back again in five minutes, to say: "He won't go with me. He's crying!"

Indeed, through the open doors Catherine could hear her baby's grief. She kissed the covered forehead of the corpse, whose form and features were almost distinguishable through the linen. Recognizing a divided duty between her feelings as a daughter and as a mother, she then left her parent and went to her child.

Little Isidore was indeed crying; and Catherine took him in her arms, and followed Pitou out of doors. As soon as her back was turned, the undertaker came into the house with his burden.

Pitou wished to keep Catherine away for half an hour or so. As if by chance he led her along the road to Boursonnes. This highway was so full of reminiscences to the poor girl, that she walked a long distance without speaking a word to Pitou; but she silently answered the various voices which made themselves heard in her heart.

When Pitou thought it was about time for the undertaker's work to be done, he said: "Mademoiselle Catherine, suppose we return to the farm."

She emerged from her thoughts as from a dream. "Oh, yes! How kind you are, dear Pitou!" and then she began to retrace her steps homeward.

When they reached the house, Madame Clement made a sign to Pitou that the undertaker's work was over. Catherine re-entered her own chamber, to put little Isidore to bed. This maternal duty accomplished, she wished to resume her place by her mother's bedside; but Pitou met her at her chamber door and said: "It will be useless, Mademoiselle Catherine, for everything is done."

"How, — all is done?"

"Yes, during our absence, Mademoiselle —" Pitou hesitated and then added: "Yes, in our absence the joiner —"

"Ah, that's why you insisted upon my going out. — I understand, you kind Pitou!"

By way of recompense he received from Catherine a grateful look, as she added: "One last prayer, and I will come away!"

She went straight to her mother's room. Pitou followed on tiptoe, but paused on the threshold. The coffin was placed on two chairs in the middle of the room. At this sight Catherine paused tremblingly, and fresh tears coursed down her cheeks. Then she knelt beside the coffin, and pressed her forehead, pale with weariness and grief, against the oaken coffin.

Along the dolorous way, wherein the living follow the dead from their beds of suffering to the eternal rest of the tomb, some fresh detail constantly disturbs the memory, and wellnigh draws the last tear from the heart's fountain.

Catherine's prayer was long. She could not detach herself from the coffin. The poor girl knew that after Isidore's death she had but two friends on earth, her mother and Pitou.

Her mother had blessed her and said farewell. Her

mother was here in the coffin, and to-morrow would be in the grave. Pitou was now therefore her only friend. It was hard to part with her last friend but one, especially when that one was her mother.

Pitou felt that he must come to Catherine's relief. He came into the chamber, and as words were useless, he tried to raise Catherine from her knees, by placing his hands under her arms.

"One prayer more, Monsieur Pitou," she said, "only one more!"

"You will make yourself ill, Mademoiselle Catherine!" said Pitou.

"What then?"

"Then I must hunt up a nurse for little Isidore!"

"Thou art right, thou art right, Pitou! My God, how kind in thee! My God, how I love thee!"

Pitou staggered, and almost fell backward. He had to support himself against the wall, as he retreated towards the door; and silent tears, almost of joy, rolled down his cheeks. Had not Catherine said that she loved him? He did not deceive himself as to the nature of her affection; but in whatever way she loved him, the simple fact was everything to his heart.

Her prayer being finished, Catherine kept her promise to Pitou, by rising and leaving the room. She walked slowly, leaning on his shoulder, while Pitou put his arm around her waist to help her along.

She allowed him to take her away; but at the door she raised her head from his shoulder, threw a final glance at the corpse, gloomily lighted by the two candles, and said: "Adieu, my mother! For the last time, adieu!" Then she passed out.

At the door of her own chamber, as she was about to enter it, Pitou checked her. She had now learned to

understand Pitou so well, that she knew he had something to say to her.

"What is it?" she asked.

"Well," stammered Pitou, somewhat embarrassed, "don't you think the time has come when you must quit the farm, Mademoiselle Catherine?"

"I shall not leave the farm till my mother herself leaves it!" said the girl.

She spoke these words with such firmness that Pitou saw her resolution was irrevocable; so he said: "When you do quit the farm, you know there are two places within a league of it, where you are sure to be welcome, — the hut of Father Clouïs, and Pitou's little house."

Pitou called his chamber and his little office a *house*.

"Thanks, Pitou!" answered Catherine, indicating with a nod that she would accept one or the other of these two asylums.

Then she went into her room without farther anxiety about Pitou, who was always sure of making himself a home somewhere.

The next day, at ten in the forenoon, the friends invited to the funeral began to flock towards the farm. All the farmers in the neighborhood were there, from Boursonnes, from Noue, from Ivors Copse, from Lagny, from Coyolles, from Haramont, and from Vivières.

Among the first arrivals was the Mayor of Villers Cotterets, the friendly Monsieur de Longpré.

At half-past ten came the Haramont National Guardsmen, with drum beating and flag trailing. Not a soldier was absent.

Each comer was welcomed by Catherine. She was clad in black, and she held her babe, also clad in black. It must be said that nobody felt anything but respect for this mother and infant, standing in

the gloom of their double bereavement and double mourning.

At eleven o'clock more than three hundred people were at the farmhouse. The priest, the bearers, and other parish officers were not there, however.

There was a delay of fifteen minutes. Nobody else arrived. Pitou climbed to the top of the highest barn, whence he could overlook a circuit of two miles, reaching from Villers Cotteret to the little village of Pisseleu. Though he had good eyes, he could see nothing of the expected ecclesiastical visitors.

He came down and imparted to Monsieur de Longpré, not only his observations, but his conclusions. His observations showed him that nothing priestly was to be seen on its winding way. His conclusion was, that nothing priestly would come; for he had heard of Abbé Fortier's visit, and his refusal to administer the last sacraments to Mother Billot.

Pitou knew Fortier, and so guessed the whole truth. Fortier was resolved not to give the aid and countenance of his sacred office to the interment of Madame Billot, and the pretext, not the cause, for this refusal was the omission of her dying confession.

These reflections, communicated by Pitou to the Mayor, and by the Mayor to his assistants, produced a desponding effect. At first everybody was silent. Then somebody said: "Well, if old Fortier won't say Mass, we can get on just as well without him."

This was the voice of Désiré Maniquet, whose anti-religious sentiments were well known.

There was another silence. Evidently it seemed a very bold thing to propose the omission of the Mass for the dead, for this was an indication of adherence to the school of Rousseau and Voltaire.

"Gentlemen," said the Mayor, "let us go to Villers Cotterets. At Villers Cotterets everything will be explained."

"To Villers Cotterets!" cried every voice.

Pitou made a sign to four of his men. They slid two gun-barrels under the coffin, and so lifted the corpse. At the door the coffin was carried before Catherine, who was kneeling, and in front of little Isidore, whom she had placed on his knees.

After the coffin had passed out, Catherine kissed the threshold of the outer door, for she never again expected to enter the farmhouse, and said to Pitou, as she rose from the ground: "You will find us in the hut at Clouïse Rock."

Then she walked rapidly away through the courtyard of the farm, and the gardens nearest the Noue Fields.

CHAPTER XXIX.

IN WHICH THE ABBÉ FORTIER SEES THAT IT IS NOT ALWAYS AS EASY AS ONE SUPPOSES TO KEEP ONE'S WORD.

THE procession advanced silently, forming a long line, when suddenly those who brought up the rear heard a loud call behind. They turned to see what was the matter.

A horseman was riding at full gallop from the direction of Ivors,—that is, along the Paris road. Part of his face was disfigured by two black bandages. He was waving his hat as a sign for them to wait.

Pitou turned to the others and said: "Hold on! It's Monsieur Billot. — Gracious! I would n't be in Abbé Fortier's skin!"

At the mention of Billot's name, everybody halted. The horseman was riding rapidly; and as he came nearer, others recognized the farmer, as Pitou had already done.

As soon as he reached the head of the procession, Billot leaped from his horse, threw the bridle on the animal's neck, and said, in very emphatic tones: "Good-day and thank you, fellow-citizens!" Then he took his place behind the coffin, instead of Pitou, who had led the mourners in Billot's absence. A stable-boy took charge of the horse and rode back to the farm.

Every one looked curiously at Billot. He was somewhat haggard and very pale. Part of his forehead and the flesh about his left eye were still black and blue, with

the blood which had settled there. His set teeth and frowning brows bespoke gloomy wrath, which was only waiting for the opportune moment to burst forth.

"Do you know what is going on?" asked Pitou.

"I know all!" answered the farmer.

As soon as Gilbert had told Billot about his wife, the farmer hired a cabriolet, in which he rode as far as Nanteuil. As the horse was able to go no farther, the farmer, feeble as he was, had hired a saddle-horse. At Levignan he had changed horses, and reached home just after the funeral procession had started.

In a few words Madame Clement had told him everything. Billot at once remounted. As he turned the wall he could see the procession, which was moving slowly along the road, and he straightway called upon it to stop.

Thereafter, as we have said before, it was he who headed the funeral procession, with scowling forehead, threatening mouth, and arms folded over his breast.

Already quiet and mournful, the company became still more silent and gloomy.

At the entrance of the village of Villers Cotterets they found a group of persons waiting. These persons took their places in the procession. As the party moved along the streets, men, women, and children came out of their houses, saluted Billot, — who answered with a nod, — and then took their places at the end of the line. By the time the procession reached the public square it numbered more than five hundred.

From the square one could see the church. What Pitou had foreseen proved to be true. The church was closed.

In front of the door the procession came to a standstill. Billot was livid. The expression of his face became more and more menacing.

It was the fashion in those days for a horn to be played in church services ; and as the horn most in favor was coiled like a snake, not only did the instrument receive a name indicative of its shape, but the hornplayer was also called a *serpent*.

The church and the Mayor's office stood side by side. As the church *serpent* also acted as janitor for the town-house, and was therefore dependent equally upon the Mayor and upon the priest, Monsieur de Longpré sent for the *serpent* and questioned him.

The priest had forbidden everybody connected with the church from having anything to do with the burial.

The Mayor asked for the church keys. The keys were at the beadle's.

"Go and get them !" said Billot to Pitou.

Pitou stretched his legs, which were like a pair of compasses, and was back again in five minutes, with this message : "Fortier has had the keys taken to the parsonage, so the church can't be opened."

"It is necessary to get the keys from old Fortier, then !" said Désiré Maniquet, who was a born advocate of extreme measures.

"Yes, yes ! We'll go to the parsonage for the keys !" cried two hundred voices.

"That will take too long," said Billot ; "and when death knocks at the door, he is not in the habit of waiting."

Then he looked about him. Opposite the church there was a house in process of erection. The workmen were squaring off a beam. Billot marched straight up to them, and motioned with his hand that he wanted the piece of timber they were shaping. The workmen at once gave it up.

The timber rested on two joists. Billot passed his

arms under the beam, near the middle of it, and raised it by a single effort ; but he had counted on lost strength. Under this enormous weight the colossus trembled, and for an instant they thought he would fall. There was a lightning glance in his eye. With an awful smile he regained his equilibrium. Then he crossed the street with the beam in his arms, his step slow but firm. He was like one of those ancient battering-rams, with which Alexander, Hannibal, and the Cæsars were wont to beat down opposing walls.

With his legs apart Billot placed himself before the door, and this formidable machine began its awful play. The door was oaken. The locks, bolts, and hinges were iron. At the third blow bolts, locks, and hinges flew off, and the oak door was half open.

Then Billot dropped the beam, which four men with difficulty carried back to the place whence he had taken it.

“ Now, Monsieur Mayor,” said Billot, “ have the coffin of my poor wife, who never did any harm to a living person, placed in the middle of the chancel. Pitou, get the beadle, the sexton, the choristers, and the altar-boys. I will see to the priest myself ! ”

The Mayor entered the church, with the coffin. Pitou went after the choristers, the altar-boys, the beadle, and the sexton. He was accompanied by Désiré Maniquet and four other men, in case they should find these church people obstinate. Billot set out for the priest’s house.

Several men wished to follow Billot, but he said : “ Let me alone ! Perhaps something serious will happen. Let each man bear the responsibility of his own deeds.”

Then he passed along the Rue de l’Église into the Rue de Soissons.

Thus for the second time, nearly two years after the first, the Revolutionary farmer was to find himself face to face with the Royalist priest. Everybody remembered what had happened the first time. Probably they should now be witnesses of a similar scene. However, seeing Billot striding towards the priest's house the people remained in their places, shaking their heads, but not taking a step.

"He told us not to follow him!" said the spectators, one to another.

The big door of the priest's house was as fast as the church door. Billot looked about him, to see if he could find another new building going up thereabouts, so as to borrow another beam. He could only see a freestone post, which had been dislodged somewhat by children at play, and now trembled in its hole, like a loose tooth in its socket.

The farmer went up to this post, shook it violently, enlarged its socket and finally tore the stone up from the earth in which it was embedded.

Lifting it above his head, like another Ajax or a new Diomed, he drew back a step, and then launched the granite block, with as much force as if it had been a catapult. The door was shattered into morsels.

At the same time that Billot opened this formidable passage, the window on the first story opened, and Fortier appeared there, shouting to all his parishioners for help; but the pastor's flock did not choose to hear his voice. They preferred letting the wolf and the shepherd fight it out together. It took a little time for Billot to break down two or three inside doors, which still separated him from the priest, as he had broken through the first. Perhaps this required ten minutes. As these minutes rolled away the priest's cries became more and more

violent and his gestures more and more expressive. It was easy to see that danger was coming nearer and nearer to the holy man.

Suddenly Billot's pale face was visible behind the priest, and the farmer's heavy hand was laid on the pastoral shoulder. The priest braced himself against the wooden crosspiece, which divided the swinging window. He also was noted for his strength, and it would have been no easy thing for a Hercules to dislodge him from his hold.

Billot put his arms about the priest's waist, and braced himself well on his legs. With a shock that might have uprooted an oak-tree, he wrenched his opponent away from the window, with such force that the wooden crosspiece remained broken in the ministerial hands.

Then both farmer and priest disappeared in the depths of the room, and the receding cries of the abbé could be heard coming from afar, like the bellowing of a bull, borne away to his lair by some fierce lion of the Atlas Mountains.

Meanwhile Pitou had gathered together the sexton, the choristers, the altar-boys, the beadle, all trembling. Following the example of the janitor-serpent they hastened to put on their capes and frocks, light the candles, and prepare everything for a mortuary Mass.

They were busy doing this when they saw Billot reappear at the side door of the parsonage, opening upon the public square, though they had expected to see him at the large door, opening on Rue de Soissons. He was dragging the priest after him; and despite the priestly resistance, the farmer walked as rapidly as if he had been alone.

Billot was no longer a man. He was one of nature's forces, like a torrent or an avalanche. Nothing human

seemed capable of resisting him. Only some other element of nature could struggle successfully against him.

When they were a hundred paces from the church the poor priest ceased to resist. He was completely subdued. Everybody stood aside to let the two men pass along. The frightened priest threw a startled glance at the door, broken into fragments like a pane of glass. When he saw in their several places — with book, halbert, or instrument in hand — those whom he had forbidden to set foot in the church, the priest shook his head, as if he at last realized that something powerful and irresistible weighed down religion, as well as its ministers. He entered the sacristy, and presently came forth in his professional robes, with the holy eucharist in his hands. He mounted the altar steps, placed the pyx on the holy table, and turned to speak the first words of the service ; but at that instant Billot lifted his hand and said : “ Enough, you miserable slave of God. I wished to curb your pride, — that ’s all ! I want people to understand that a good woman, like my wife, can get along without the prayers of a bigoted and despicable priest like you ! ”

As a great noise rose to the church rafters after these words, Billot added : “ If this is sacrilege, let the sacrilege fall on me alone ! ”

Turning towards the crowd, which now not only filled the church, but the courtyard of the townhouse next door, he said : “ Citizens, — to the cemetery ! ”

The general voice repeated his words : “ To the cemetery ! ”

The four military bearers once more thrust their gun-barrels under the coffin and lifted the corpse. As they had come, — without priest, without hymns, without any

of the funereal pomp with which religion is accustomed to escort the bereaved friends,—they now resumed their walk to the cemetery, Billot leading the mourners. There were six hundred persons in the procession.

The cemetery was situated, it may be remembered, at the end of a lane called Pleux, twenty-five rods from Aunt Angelica's cottage. The gate was locked, like the doors of the church and parsonage. Strangely enough, Billot paused before this frail obstacle. The dead showed respect to the dead!

At a sign from the farmer, Pitou ran after the gravedigger. The gravedigger of course had the key of the cemetery. Five minutes later Pitou brought not only the key, but two shovels.

Fortier had interdicted the poor dead woman both from the church and from holy ground. The gravedigger had received orders not to dig a grave.

At this fresh manifestation of the priest's malevolence towards the farmer, something like a threatening shiver ran through the crowd. If in his heart Billot had cherished a quarter part of the gall which belongs to religious fanatics,—gall which had aforetime astonished the satirical poet Boileau,—the farmer had only to speak the word, and the priest would have enjoyed the satisfaction of that martyrdom for which he had so ardently appealed, on that beautiful day in the autumn of 1789, when he refused to celebrate Mass on the Patriot Altar in the square.

Billot possessed the lion-like anger of the populace. He tore his way along, he broke through all obstacles which beset him, but he never retraced his steps.

He made a sign of thanks to Pitou, whose intentions he understood. He took the key, opened the gate, let the coffin pass in, followed it himself, and was in turn

followed by the funeral escort, which now included nearly everybody in the neighborhood who could walk.

Only the ultra Royalists and bigots stayed at home. It need not be said that Aunt Angelica, who was among the stay-at-homes, locked her door in terror, crying out against "the Abomination of Desolation set up in the Holy Place," and calling down the thunderbolts of Heaven upon the head of her nephew.

All those, however, who had kind hearts, good sense, domestic affection, all those who were disgusted at seeing hatred substituted for mercy, and vengeance for humanity, — that is to say, three-fourths of the population, — were on hand, to protest, not against God, not against religion, but against priestly bigotry.

When they arrived at the place where the grave should have been dug, — for the gravedigger had already marked the spot before he received orders not to dig it, — Billot extended his hand to Pitou, who handed him one of the spades.

Then Billot and Pitou, with bare heads, surrounded by a circle of citizens whose heads were likewise uncovered, — under the devouring sun of the latter days of July, — began to dig the grave for that unhappy woman; a woman so pious and resigned in all things, that she would have been greatly surprised at what was taking place, and would have greatly preferred not to die, if she had foreseen the scandal which her death was to cause.

The labor lasted an hour, and neither of the two diggers had any idea of stopping till the grave was finished.

Meantime somebody had brought some ropes, and when the grave was dug the cords were in readiness. Billot and Pitou lowered the coffin into the grave. These two men undertook this last duty so simply and naturally, that

not one of the onlookers thought of offering to help them. Indeed they would have deemed it a sacrilege to interfere with this pious task.

As the first lumps of earth fell upon the oaken coffin, Billot passed his hand over his eyes, and Pitou wiped his tears on his cuff. Then they resolutely replaced the earth.

When all was over, Billot threw his shovel aside, and extended both arms to Pitou, who threw himself upon the farmer's breast.

"God is my witness," said Billot, "that in thee I embrace all the grand and simple virtues on earth, — charity, devotion, unselfishness, fraternity, — and that I devote my life to the triumph of these virtues."

Then, extending his hand over the grave, he added : "God also be my witness that I swear eternal warfare against the King, who has tried to have me murdered, against the nobles, who have dishonored my daughter, against the priests, who have refused burial to my wife !"

Turning towards the spectators, who were full of sympathy over this triple adjuration, the farmer said : "Brothers, a new Assembly is to be convened in Paris, in place of that convention of traitors now sitting in the shadow of the Feuillant Club. Choose me for your representative in that new Assembly, and you shall see that I know how to keep my oaths !"

A cry of universal assent met this proposition from Billot ; and in such an hour, on the grave of his wife, — an awful altar, worthy of the most solemn oath that could be taken, — Billot was named as a candidate for the new Legislative Assembly.

Billot thanked his compatriots for their sympathy, which they had shown him both in his hatred and his

friendship ; and then each one went home, — citizen or peasant, — carrying in his heart the ultra Revolutionary spirit, the weapons therefor being furnished, in their blindness, by kings, nobles, and priests, — the very weapons that were to destroy themselves.

CHAPTER XXX.

DEPUTY BILLOT.

THE events which we have recorded produced a deep impression, not only on the inhabitants of Villers Cotterets, but on the farmers in the neighboring towns.

In electoral matters the farmers were a great power. They employed ten, twenty, or thirty day-laborers each ; and though nominally suffrage was of two kinds at that era, the election really depended upon what were called the *campagnes*.

Each of these men, as he went home after the funeral, grasped Billot's hand, and said to him these two simple words : " Be easy ! " and Billot indeed returned to his farm in a tranquil frame of mind, for now he could see, for the first time, an efficacious method of repaying the nobility and royalty for the evil they had wrought.

Billot *felt* ! He did not reason ; and his desire for vengeance was as blind as the wounds which he had received.

He returned to the farm without saying a word about Catherine. Nothing indicated that he had known of her temporary presence at the farm. For a year he had not spoken her name under any circumstances. To him his daughter was as if she had never existed.

It was not so with Pitou, — that heart of gold. From the bottom of his nature he regretted that Catherine could not love him ; but when he thought of Isidore, and compared that elegant young man with himself, Pitou

perfectly understood how it was that Catherine could not choose but love the Viscount.

Pitou envied Isidore, but he entertained no ill-will towards Catherine. On the contrary, he still loved her with profound and absolute devotion.

To say that this devotion was wholly exempt from pain would be false ; but the agony which harrowed Pitou's heart, at each new proof of affection given by Catherine to her lover, only showed the ineffable goodness of the lad's soul.

When Isidore was killed at Varennes, Pitou felt for Catherine only the deepest pity. His feelings were the very opposite of Billot's, and he rendered complete justice to the young nobleman, remembering all that was worthy, good, and generous, even in a rival.

As we have seen, the result of this was not solely that Pitou perhaps loved Catherine the more when she was sadly clad in mourning, than he had loved her when she was joyous and merry, but also — what one might have believed impossible — that he found himself loving the poor little orphan almost as much as he loved Catherine herself.

We ought not to be surprised, therefore, that after Pitou had taken leave of Billot, like the others, he did not return to the farm, but wended his way towards Haramont.

So accustomed were his neighbors to his frequent disappearances and returns, that despite the high position which he occupied in their village, as their military chief, nobody minded his absence. When Pitou went away, they whispered : "General Lafayette has sent for Pitou !" and that was all.

When he returned they asked their captain for the news. Thanks to Gilbert, Pitou was always able to

impart the freshest and most reliable intelligence; and when, several days later, the villagers found that Pitou's predictions were fulfilled, they continued to repose in him the blindest confidence, as if he were their prophet as well as their captain.

Gilbert knew all that was good and true in Pitou. He felt that when a critical moment should come, here was a man to whom he might confide his own life or Sebastien's, a treasure or a commission, trusting to his strength and fidelity.

Every time Pitou went to Paris, Gilbert would ask Pitou if he needed anything, and that, too, without making him blush the least in the world. Pitou always replied: "No, Monsieur Gilbert;" but this did not prevent Gilbert from giving Pitou several louis, which Pitou quietly put into his pocket,

Several louis was a fortune to Pitou, added to the special resources and the tithes which he was able to levy on the Orleans forest. So Pitou never reached the end of his handful of louis before he saw the Doctor again; and then the Doctor once more replenished Pitou's pockets from the spring of Pactolus.

Considering Pitou's disposition towards Catherine and Isidore, it is not surprising that he hastily separated himself from Billot, in order to learn how it fared with the young mother and her child.

On his way to Haramont, Pitou passed by Clouïse Rock. A hundred paces from the hut he met Father Clouïs, who was on his way home with a hare in his gamebag; for it was Hare-day.

In two words Father Clouïs announced to Pitou that Catherine had come to ask for her former dwelling-place, which the old man had hastily restored to her. The poor girl had wept plentifully on entering the little

room where she had become a mother, and where Isidore had conferred upon her such lively proofs of his affection.

All these sorrows were not without a certain charm. Whosoever has suffered a great affliction knows that the most cruel hours are those when the fountains of tears are dried, and the happiest hours are those when the tears flow freely.

When Pitou presented himself at the threshold of the hut, he found Catherine seated on her bed, her cheeks wet and her babe in her arms.

Seeing Pitou, Catherine set her babe on her knees, and offered both hands and her forehead to the young man. Pitou joyfully grasped her hands and kissed her forehead; and so for an instant Baby was enclosed by the arch above him, formed by the four clasped hands, and Pitou's lips resting upon the mother's fair forehead.

Then falling on his knees before Catherine, and kissing the infant's little hands, Pitou said: "Ah, Mademoiselle Catherine, be easy; for I'm rich, and little Monsieur Isidore sha'n't want for anything."

Having fifteen louis, Pitou called himself rich. Herself good in heart and mind, Catherine appreciated all that was good in others.

"Thanks, Monsieur Pitou," she said. "I believe you, and it makes me very happy to believe you; for you are my only friend. If you abandon us, we shall be alone in the world; but you will never abandon us, will you?"

"Oh, Mademoiselle," said Pitou, sobbing, "don't say such things to me, or you'll make me cry away all the tears in my body!"

"I was wrong to speak so," said she, "I was wrong! Please forgive me!"

"No, you were right, on the contrary! It's I who am a fool, for crying in this way."

"Monsieur Pitou," said Catherine, "I need the air. Give me your arm, and we'll walk under the great trees. I think it'll do me good."

"And me too, Mademoiselle," said Pitou, "for I feel quite stifled."

The baby did not need the air. He had drunk largely at the maternal fountain, and needed sleep. Catherine laid him on the bed, and gave her arm to Pitou.

Five minutes later they were walking beneath the noble trees of the forest, that magnificent temple reared by the hand of the Lord of Nature, — his divine and immortal daughter. As a certain American poet has said :

The groves were God's first temples.

In spite of himself this promenade, with Catherine leaning on his arm, recalled to Pitou the Whitsunday, some two years and a half earlier, when he conducted Catherine to the ballroom, and Viscount Isidore danced with her, to the lad's great distress.

What an accumulation of events during these thirty months! Without being so great a philosopher as Voltaire or Rousseau, Pitou could understand that Catherine and himself were but atoms involved in the general whirlpool; but, however small, these atoms have their joys and sorrows, just as much as the grand lords, princes, or even the kings and queens.

Though the mills of God grind slowly,
Yet they grind exceeding small.

Turned by the hands of Fatality, the millstones crush crowns and thrones into powder; and they had crushed into dust Catherine's happiness, quite as positively as if she had been seated on a throne and worn a crown on her head.

In a word, note the difference which the Revolution had made in Pitou's situation, — that Revolution to which he had contributed so ably, though without knowing what he did, and building better, or worse, than he knew.

Two and a half years before, Pitou was but a poor little peasant-boy, driven away from her home by Aunt Angelica, harbored by Billot, befriended by Catherine, sacrificed to Isidore.

To-day Pitou was a power. He wore a sabre at his side, and epaulets on his shoulders, and he was called *captain*; while Isidore was dead, and it was he, Pitou, who protected Catherine and her child.

In Pitou was a perfect illustration of Danton's response to some one who asked him: "What is your purpose in fostering the Revolution?"

"To put down those who are on top, and to raise those who are under foot!" was Danton's reply.

Although all these notions rattled through Pitou's brain, Pitou was too good and modest to take any advantage of them; but, on his knees, he begged Catherine to let him protect herself and her child.

On her side, Catherine — as is the case with all suffering hearts — found her appreciation heightened by sorrow, rather than by joy. In her days of happiness Pitou was only a good-natured boy, of very little importance, in her estimation. Now he had become in her eyes the unselfish creature he really was, — a man full of goodness, candor, and devotion.

Unhappy as she now was, and greatly in need of a friend, she saw in Pitou just the friend she needed. As Catherine therefore always welcomed him with outstretched hands and smiling lips, Pitou began to live a life of which he had no previous glimpse, even in his utmost dreams of paradise.

Meanwhile, though still mute in regard to his daughter, Billot pursued, even while busy with his harvest, his idea of being elected a Deputy to the Legislature. One man only might possibly prevail against Billot, if he cherished the same ambition ; but Charny was enjoying unexpected felicity in the château at Boursonnes, where he was shut up with Andrée, and absorbed wholly in love and happiness. He was so oblivious to all the world, that he believed the world had forgotten him.

So the Count cared naught for politics ; and as there was no special opposition to Billot's election in the district of Villers Cotterets, the farmer was elected Deputy by a big majority.

Once elected, Billot set about making as much money as possible. The year had been a good one. He settled with his tenants, reserving the part of their earnings which belonged to him. He set aside as much seed-grain as was necessary for planting, and as much hay, oats, and straw as was needful for his cattle. He put aside as much money as was required for the support of his laborers.

Then, one morning, he sent for Pitou. As we know, Pitou was in the habit of visiting Billot from time to time. Billot always received him with open hands, offering him breakfast, if it was the breakfast hour, asking him to dinner, if it was time for dinner, or giving him a glass of wine or cider, if it was the hour only for drinking a glass of wine or a mug of cider ; but never before had Billot specially sent after Pitou, and it was not without trepidation that Pitou went to the farm.

Billot was always serious. Since his daughter left her home, nobody could say that he had ever seen a smile on the farmer's lips. Now Billot was more grave than usual.

According to his custom he offered Pitou his hand ; but the hand which Pitou gave him he squeezed harder than usual, and retained in both his own.

Pitou looked at the farmer in astonishment, and the latter said : " Pitou, thou 'rt an honest man ! "

" Gracious, Monsieur Billot," replied Pitou, " I hope so ! "

" And I 'm *sure* of it ! "

" You 're very kind to say so, Monsieur Billot ! " said Pitou.

" I 've decided, as I 'm going away, that it 's thee who must be at the head of the farm. "

" Me, Monsieur ? " said our Pitou, greatly astonished. " Impossible ! "

" Wherefore impossible ? "

" Why, Monsieur Billot, because there are lots of little things where the eye of a woman is indispensable. "

" I know that," said Billot. " Pick out a woman who will share the care with thee. I won't even ask her name. I need n't know it. When I 'm coming home to the farm, I 'll notify thee a week beforehand, in order that she may get herself out of the way, if the woman don't wish to see me, or I had better not see her. "

" Well, Monsieur Billot ? " said Pitou.

" Well," continued Billot, " all the grain necessary for sowing is in the loft. In the granaries are all the straw, hay, oats, and fodder necessary for the horses and cattle. In this drawer is the money needed for the wages and nourishment of the household. "

As he spoke Billot pulled out a drawer full of money.

" Stop a minute, Monsieur Billot ! " said Pitou. " How much is there in that drawer ? "

" I don't know ! " said Billot, closing the drawer again.

Then he locked it and gave Pitou the key, as he added :
"When there is need of more, ask me for it."

Pitou understood how much confidence was implied in this response. He opened his arms to embrace Billot, but suddenly he thought how bold such an action must appear, in a lad like himself; and so he said : "Pardon, Monsieur Billot, I ask a thousand pardons!"

"Pardon for what, my friend?" asked Billot, touched by this humility. "Pardon for an honest man, because he reaches out his arms to embrace another honest man? Come, Pitou! Come, embrace me!"

Pitou threw himself into the farmer's arms.

Presently Pitou said : "But if by chance you happen to need me down there —?"

"Be easy, Pitou! I sha'n't forget thee!"

Presently Billot added : "It's now two o'clock in the afternoon. At five I start for Paris. At six thou wilt be here with the woman selected to help thee."

"So?" said Pitou. "Then I've no time to lose. Good-bye, dear Monsieur Billot!"

"Good-bye, Pitou!"

Pitou hurried away from the farm. Billot watched him till he was out of sight.

When the lad had disappeared the farmer said to himself : "Why could n't my girl Catherine fall in love with a brave fellow like him, instead of that snake-in-the-grass of a nobleman, who leaves her a widow without being married, a mother without being a wife?"

Needless to say that at five o'clock Billot took the stage at Villers Cotterets for Paris; and that at six Pitou, Catherine, and little Isidore came again to the farmhouse.

CHAPTER XXXI.

APPEARANCE OF THE NEW ASSEMBLY.

It was on October 1, 1791, that the new Assembly was to be inaugurated. Like the other Deputies, Billot was on hand towards the end of September.

The new Assembly was made up of seven hundred and forty-five members. Among them were four hundred attorneys and solicitors; seventy-two authors, journalists, poets; seventy Constitutionalist priests, — that is, priests who had taken the oath of allegiance to the Constitution. The two hundred and three other members were either landowners and farmers, like Billot, — who was both landlord and farmer, — or men engaged in some literary or mechanical pursuit.

The special characteristic prevalent among the new Deputies was their youthfulness. Most of them were not over twenty-six years. It seemed as if France had sent a new and unknown generation of men, to break violently with the past. Noisy, stormy, revolutionary, she wished to dethrone tradition.

The members generally had cultivated minds. As we have said, there were poets, lawyers, chemists. They were full of energy and grace, possessing extraordinary verve, and the courage of their convictions. They were debaters and fighters, but they were ignorant of state-affairs, inexperienced, and evidently brought with them that grand but terrible element which we call the *unknown*.

Now the unknown in politics always engenders anxiety. With the exception of Condorcet and Brissot, the same question might have been asked of almost any one of these men, — Who is he?

Where were the great lights or even the torches of the Constituent Assembly? Where were the Mirabeaus, the Sieyès, the Duports, the Baillys, the Robespierres, the Barnaves, the Cazalès? All had vanished.

Here and there, as if astray among these ardent youngsters, were a few white heads. The others were representatives of a young and manly France, — a black-haired France. Fine heads these, to cut off in a revolution, — and nearly all of them were put to that use.

Within the kingdom there was the scent of civil war. Outside were rumors of foreign wars. These young men were not therefore Deputies simply; they were warriors. The advance guard came from the Gironde, a department which, in case of war, had offered to send to the frontier all its men between the ages of twenty and fifty.

This vanguard included men like Vergniaud, Guadet, Gensonné, Fonfrède, Ducos, — the clique soon called the Girondists, giving their name to a famous party which, in spite of its faults, has always received the sympathy of the world by reason of its misfortunes.

Born in the breath of war, the members leaped with a single bound into the bloody arena of political life, like athletes thirsting for contest.

Simply by seeing these Deputies rush tumultuously to their seats in the hall, one could catch anticipatory glimpses of the tempest which was to break forth in the storms of June 20, August 10, and January 21.

No longer were part of the benches known as the Right. In other words, there were no more Aristocrats, and the Right was therefore suppressed.

Nearly the whole Assembly came to Paris armed against two enemies, — the nobility and the priesthood. If these enemies resisted, the Deputies were under orders, from their constituents, to trample down this resistance.

As to the King, it was left to the consciences of the Deputies to dispose of him as they judged best. He was pitied; and it was hoped that he would escape from the triple power of the Queen, the Aristocracy, and the Clergy. If he sustained them, he must be crushed with them.

Poor King! He was no longer to be called King, Louis Sixteenth, or even his Majesty, but simply the Executive Power.

The first movement of these Deputies was to look about them, as they entered a hall with whose arrangements they were wholly unfamiliar.

On each side was a reserved gallery.

“For whom are those reserved places?” asked several voices.

“For the outgoing Deputies,” responded the architect; for the place had been reconstructed.

“Oh ho!” growled Vergniaud, “what does that mean, — a censorial committee? Is this the Legislative Hall of the representatives of the Nation, or is it a school-room?”

“Hold on!” said Hérault de Séchelles, “let us see how our masters behave!”

“Usher!” cried Thuriot, “you will tell people, as they come in, that there is in this Assembly a man who had the Governor of the Bastille thrown from the summit of his own walls, and that the name of this man is Thuriot.” Eighteen months later this man called himself *Tue-roi* (the King-killer, — or literally, *kill-king*).

The first act of the new Assembly was to send a deputation to the Tuileries.

The King was so imprudent as to meet the deputation by one of his ministers, as proxy, who said: "Gentlemen, the King cannot receive you at this time. Return at three o'clock."

The delegates returned to the Assembly.

"Well?" said the other members, as they saw the deputation re-enter.

"Citizens," said one of them, "the King is not quite ready, and we have three hours before us."

"Good!" cried Couthon the cripple, speaking from his chair. "Let us utilize these three hours. I propose that the title of Majesty be suppressed!"

The response was a general hurrah. The title of Majesty was suppressed by acclamation, without a demand for a more explicit vote.

"What shall the Executive Power be called?" asked another voice.

"Let him be called the King of the French!" responded another voice. "With such a fine title as that, Monsieur Capet ought to be contented."

All eyes were turned upon the man who ventured to call the King of France 'Monsieur Capet.' It was Billot.

"Let it be King of the French!" was the nearly unanimous cry.

"Look here!" said Couthon, "there are two hours left. I have another proposition to make."

"Go on!" shouted everybody.

"I move that when the King comes in we rise, but that when he is seated, we sit down again, and put on our hats."

For a few minutes there was a fearful tumult. The

shouts of agreement were so boisterous as to be mistaken for cries of opposition.

At last, when the noise was stilled, it was found that everybody was agreed. The proposition was adopted.

Couthon looked at the clock. "We have yet an hour to wait," he said, "and I've a third proposal to make."

"Hear! Hear!" cried everybody.

"I propose," added Couthon, with that soft voice of his, which upon occasion could vibrate so terribly, "I propose that there shall be no throne for the King, but simply an armchair."

The speaker was interrupted by loud applause.

"Hold on!" said Couthon, raising his hand. "I've not yet finished."

Silence was at once restored.

"I move that the King's armchair be placed at the President's left hand."

"Take care!" called a voice. "That will not only abolish the throne, but subordinate the King!"

"Very well!" said Couthon. "I move, not only to suppress the throne, but to put down the King."

There was a frightful outcry. In that awful hand-clapping was the terrible spirit of June 20 and August 10.

"Very well, citizens," said Couthon, "the three hours have slipped away. I thank the King of the French for not being on hand. We have not wasted our time in waiting."

The deputation again went to the Tuileries. This time the King received them; but the inimical step had already been taken.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I cannot go to the Assembly for three days."

The delegates looked at each other, and then said: "Then, Sire, that will be on the fourth?"

"Yes, gentlemen, on the fourth!" said the King, turning his back upon them.

On October 4 the King said he was not well, and could not come till the seventh.

The absence of the King on the fourth did not prevent the Constitution of 1791 — that important work of the old Assembly — from entering the new Assembly.

It was escorted by a guard of a dozen of the oldest members of the defunct Constituent Assembly.

It was borne by Camus, the Recorder. He ascended the platform, and exhibited the document to the public.

"Citizens," said he, like another Moses, "here are the tables of the law!"

Then began the ceremony of taking the oath.

All the Deputies filed past the precious document, but they were glum and cold. Many foresaw that this powerless Constitution would not last a year. They swore for the sake of swearing, because it was a ceremony imposed upon them, — the thing to be done.

Three-quarters of those who took the oath did not mean to keep it.

The report of the first day's three votes spread rapidly throughout Paris: No more talk about Majesty! No more thrones! A simple armchair at the President's left-hand.

This was as much as to say: "No more kings!"

As usual, finances first took the alarm. The public bonds fell terribly in value. Bankers began to tremble.

On October 9 a great change was made.

By the terms of this new law there was no longer a commander of the National Guard. On the ninth Lafayette was to resign his post, and each of the six chiefs of the six legions was to take his turn in being general commander.

The day fixed for the royal visit at last arrived. Everybody had forgotten that it was to be on the seventh.

The King entered. In opposition to what had been planned, so great an honor was a royal visit still esteemed, that the Deputies not only rose and took off their hats, but saluted his Majesty with loud acclaims. The Assembly even shouted : "Long live the King!"

In an instant, as if the Royalists present wished to throw their defiance in the face of the new Deputies, some people in the galleries shouted : "Long live his Majesty!"

A long murmur ran through the benches occupied by the members. They raised their eyes to the galleries, and saw that these cries came chiefly from the seats set apart for the members of the late Constituent Assembly.

"All right, gentlemen," said Couthon, "to-morrow we'll attend to your case!"

The King made a sign that he wished to speak. Everybody listened. The discourse which he pronounced, composed by Duport du Tertre, was one of the highest to the necessity of maintaining order, and of rallying to the support of a beloved country.

Pastoret presided at the Assembly. Pastoret was a Royalist.

In his speech the King had said that he wished to be loved.

"We also, Sire," said the President, "wish to be loved, and by yourself!"

At these words general applause broke forth.

The King, by his discourse, took it for granted that the Revolution was finished. At that time the Assembly

apparently believed as he did. But if the Revolution is to be finished, Sire, it will not do for you to be longer the voluntary King of the priests, or the involuntary King of fugitive noblemen !

The impression produced upon the Assembly spread rapidly through Paris.

That night the King went to the theatre with his children. He was received with thunders of applause.

Many wept ; and even the King shed tears, he was so easily moved by his sensibilities.

During that night the King wrote to all the European powers to announce his acceptance of the Constitution of 1791. It will be remembered that once, in a moment of enthusiasm, he swore to support that Constitution, even before it was completed.

The next day Couthon remembered what he had promised the old Constituent Assembly members the day before. He announced that he had a motion to make.

Everybody knew what Couthon's motions were, and everybody was silent.

"Citizens," said Couthon, "I move that every trace of privilege be effaced from this Assembly, and that consequently all the galleries be henceforth open to the public."

This motion was unanimously passed.

The next day the populace invaded the seats hitherto belonging to the outgoing Deputies ; and in the face of this invasion, the ghost of the Constituent Assembly vanished forever.

CHAPTER XXXII.

FRANCE AND FOREIGN PARTS.

As we have said before, the new Assembly was specially instructed to work against the priesthood and the nobility.

It was a genuine crusade; only the motto on the banners was not *God so Decrees!* but *The People so Decree!*

On October 9, the day of Lafayette's dismissal, a report on the religious troubles in the Vendée was read by Gallois and Gensonné. It was wise and moderate, and thus made a deep impression.

Who had inspired such a document, — if, indeed, he were not its sole author? A keen and skilful politician, who will shortly enter the scenes depicted in our pages.

The Assembly was tolerant. One of the members, Fauchet, asked only that the State should cease to pay those priests who declared their unwillingness to obey the voice of the Nation, though pensions might be given to old and infirm priests, even if they continued to be refractory.

Ducos went farther. He demanded toleration. He insisted that the priests should be granted entire liberty, either to take or not to take the oath.

Farther still went the kind Constitutionalist Bishop Torne. He declared that even rebellious refusal, on the part of these priests, was a proof of their truth and honesty.

We shall presently see how the fanatics at Avignon responded to this forbearance.

Before the discussion about the Constitutionalist priests was fairly over, the question of the refugees was taken up in the Assembly. This was to transfer the debate from civil war to foreign, and so touch both of France's bleeding wounds.

Fauchet had treated the clerical question. Brissot took up the emigrant question.

Brissot took a stand both humane and elevated. He took up the question where Mirabeau had let it fall from his dying hands a year before.

He asked that a difference should be recognized between those who fled their country from fear, and those who went away in hate. For the former he asked indulgence; for the latter, severity.

In his opinion, it was not right to force citizens to remain within the kingdom. On the contrary, he thought it better to leave every door open.

He did not wish the confiscation of the estates, even of those who had emigrated through enmity to progressive principles. He only demanded that no funds should be paid over to those who were in arms against France.

Indeed it was a marvellous fact, that France continued to pay foreigners for their support of Condé, of Lambesq, of Charles de Lorraine, and their followers. In due time we shall see how the fugitives deserved this gentleness.

As Fauchet finished his speech, important news came from Avignon. As Brissot ended his speech, equally important intelligence came from other parts of Europe.

Then a bright light shone like an immense conflagration, from the land of the setting sun. This was the news from the West Indies, where France still held fast to certain islands.

Let us begin with the disturbances at Avignon. Let us narrate briefly the history of this second Rome.

Benedict the Eleventh died in a most scandalous fashion, in 1304. It was said that he was poisoned by eating some figs.

The King of France was Philip the Fourth, — Philip le Bel (the Fair), as he is always called.

Not many years before, when Boniface the Eighth was Pope, Philip the Fair had violently insulted him, through the hands of Prince Colonna, who was the ally of France; and in return Boniface placed Philip under the ban of the Papal See.

Now that a new pope was to be chosen, Philip the Fair kept his eyes keenly fixed on Perugia, where the electoral conclave was to be held.

For a long time Philip had cherished the idea of drawing the papal seat away from Rome, and establishing it in France. When once he had it in his own jail, so to speak, he could make the papacy work for his own profit. In the words of our great master, Michelet, the Pope might write lucrative ecclesiastical bulls for Philip, while displaying his own infallibility, and thus establish the Holy Ghost as the scribe and preceptor of the House of France, — that eldest daughter of the Church.

One day there came to Philip a messenger covered with dust, and so dead with fatigue that he could scarcely speak.

He brought this news. In the electoral conclave the French and Anti-French parties were so equally balanced that no pope could possibly be elected by the usual ballot; so there was talk about convening a new conclave, in some other city.

This idea did not suit the Perugians, who wanted to

have a pope elected in their own city. They therefore resorted to an ingenious artifice. They placed a guard around the conclave, so that nobody could carry food or drink to the cardinals composing it, who were, as usual, in secret session. The cardinals uttered loud protests.

"Name your pope," cried the Perugians, "and you shall have plenty to eat and drink."

The cardinals held out twenty-four hours. At the end of twenty-four hours they had come to a decision.

They decided that the Anti-French party should choose three cardinals; and that out of the three the French party should choose one, who should be made pope.

Naturally enough, the Anti-French party nominated three enemies of Philip the Fair. One of these three enemies of Philip was Bertrand de Got, Archbishop of Bordeaux; who was, however, known to be far less the enemy of France than he was the friend to his own personal interests.

A messenger was at once sent to Philip with the news. It was the messenger who covered the ground in four days and nights, and arrived half dead with fatigue. There was no time to be lost. Bertrand de Got must be secured to Philip's interests. Philip accordingly sent to Bertrand de Got an express messenger — completely ignorant of the aim of the high mission with which he was charged — to ask the Archbishop to meet the King in the forest of Andelys.

The place of the meeting was at the crossing of three roads, and the night was dark enough for an incantation. It was under such conditions that those who seek superhuman favors of the Devil are obliged to swear allegiance as his liegeman, and kiss his cloven foot.

To quiet the Archbishop's suspicions, the interview began with a celebration of Mass. On the altar, at the

moment of the elevation of the Sacred Host, — which announces the miracle of transubstantiation, and gives life to the service, — both King and Prelate swore themselves to secrecy. Then the candles were extinguished. Those who had celebrated the Mass withdrew, — followed by the altar-boys, carrying the crucifix and the sacred vases, — as if they feared it would be a profanation for them to be even mute witnesses of the scene about to take place.

The King and Archbishop remained alone.

Who told Villani the incidents we are about to describe, and which we gather from him? Satan, perhaps, who must have been a third party in that interview.

“Archbishop,” said Philip le Bel to Bertrand de Got, “I can make thee pope, if I choose. That’s why I’ve sought this meeting.”

“The proof?” asked Bertrand.

“The proof is here!” and Philip showed a letter from the cardinals of his own party; wherein, instead of announcing their choice of a pope, they asked whom Philip wished them to vote for, out of the three candidates nominated.

“What must I do to be pope?” asked the Gascon, overcome with joy, and throwing himself at Philip’s feet.

“Agree to grant me the six favors I ask.”

“Speak, my sovereign! I am your subject, and it’s my duty to obey.”

The King raised him, kissed him on his lips and said: “The six special favors which I ask of thee are as follows.”

Bertrand listened with all his ears; for he feared, not so much lest the King should ask favors which would compromise the Archbishop’s spiritual salvation, as those which were beyond his power to grant.

"The first favor," quoth Philip, "is that I shall be reconciled with Holy Church, and that my offence against Boniface Eighth, at Anagni, may be pardoned."

"Granted," was Bertrand's hasty response.

"Secondly, the holy sacrament of communion shall be administered to me and mine."

This was a great favor, for it will be remembered that Philip the Fair was under the ban of excommunication.

"Granted!" said Bertrand, astonished that such small rewards should be asked in return for a boon so great as the papal tiara. However, there were four other favors to come!

"Thirdly, the tithes of the clergy in my kingdom must be given to the Crown for the next five years, to help defray the cost of war with Flanders."

"Granted!"

"The fourth favor is that the bull issued by Boniface, and called *Ausculda fili*, shall be annulled and destroyed."

"Agreed! Agreed!"

"Fifthly, that Marco Jacopo, Messire Pietro de Colonna, and other friends of mine, shall be raised to the rank of cardinal."

"Granted! Granted! Granted!"

Then Philip paused.

"And the sixth favor, Monseigneur?" anxiously asked the Archbishop.

"The sixth," replied Philip, "I reserve for another time and place, for it is something very important and secret."

"Important and secret?" repeated Bertrand.

"So important and secret, that I wish to swear thee to it beforehand on the cross!" and drawing a crucifix from his pocket he presented it to the Archbishop.

The latter hesitated an instant. This was the last ditch to be crossed. Once over it, he would be supreme pontiff!

Presently he took the image of the Saviour in his hand, and said, in a firm voice; "I swear!"

"Very well!" said the King. "In which city of my kingdom wilt thou be crowned?"

"In Lyons!"

"Come with me! Thou art Pope, under the name of Clement the Fifth."

Clement the Fifth followed Philip the Fair, but he was uneasy about the sixth claim which his suzerain held in reserve.

On the day when this sixth demand was presented he found it to be a comparatively small matter, and made no difficulty about granting it. This favor was the destruction of the Order of Knights Templar.

The King had sworn to make Bertrand supreme pontiff; and to ensure the latter's faithfulness he had to leave a brother and two nephews in Philip's care, as hostages.

Probably all this was not quite after God's own heart, for the divine displeasure was manifested in a most decided way.

As the procession left the church after Clement Fifth's coronation, and was passing a wall loaded with spectators, the wall gave way, wounded the King, killed the Duke of Brittany, and knocked down the Pope. His triple crown fell off, and this symbol of the papacy was rolled in the dirt.

A week later, in a banquet given by the new pontiff, the servants of his Holiness got into a quarrel with the attendants of some of the cardinals. The Pope's brother tried to separate them, and was killed.

These were bad omens ; and to these omens was added a bad example.

The Pope fleeced the Church, but a woman fleeced the Pope. This woman was the beautiful Brunissande, who cost Christendom more than the Holy Land, — if we may trust the Chroniclers of that era.

Meanwhile the Pope kept his promises, one by one. The Pope whom Philip had created was a pontiff after Philip's own heart. For the King, he was a sort of hen laying golden eggs, whom his Majesty forced to lay both night and morning, threatening to cut her open if she did not attend strictly to business.

Every day, like Shylock in "The Merchant of Venice," he levied a pound of flesh from his debtor, according to the bond.

Boniface Eighth was declared to have been a heretic and a false pope. King Philip was relieved from his excommunication. The clerical tithes were remitted to the Crown for five years. Twelve cardinals were appointed, all devoted to Philip the Fair. The bull was revoked which Boniface Eighth had fulminated, and which alienated from Philip the ecclesiastical funds. The Order of Knights Templar was abolished, and the Templars put "in durance vile."

After all these things had been done according to agreement, it came to pass that on May Day, 1308, the Emperor of Germany, Albert of Austria, died. Then Philip conceived the idea of having his own brother, Charles of Valois, elected Emperor. It was the business of Clement Fifth to work for the accomplishment of this result.

The bondage of the pontifical hireling still continued. Bertrand's poor soul, saddled and bridled, was being ridden to Hell by the King of France.

He at last found spirit enough to throw his awful rider. Ostensibly Clement wrote in favor of Charles of Valois, for the imperial crown; but secretly he acted against him.

Thereafter he began to see the necessity of getting outside of France. The Pope's life was no longer secure in Philip's territory, especially as the accession of a dozen of Philip's friends to the College of Cardinals placed future papal elections wholly in Philip's hands.

The Fifth Clement remembered the figs which the Eleventh Benedict had eaten.

Clement was at Poitiers. He managed to escape in the night, and go to Avignon.

To explain the status of Avignon is no easy task. It was France, and yet it was not France. It was in France, yet not of it. It was a frontier, a neutral realm, an asylum, a city of refuge. It was an old principality, a republic, like San Marino; only it was ruled by two sovereigns: by the King of Naples, through his rights as Count of Provence; by the King of France, through his rights as Count of Toulouse.

Each of these two rulers held the lordship over one half of Avignon. Neither could arrest a fugitive on the soil governed by the other.

Clement Fifth naturally sought refuge in that part belonging to the King of Naples.

In escaping, however, from the power of Philip the Fair, he did not escape from the curse of the Grand Master of the Templars.

When Jacques de Molay ascended the pyre built for him in Paris,—in the Isle of the Cité in the River Seine, which is still the centre of the capital,—that noble man challenged his two executioners, Philip the Fair and Bertrand the Bold, to meet him at the divine

Judgment Seat within the year. Aristophanes declares that dying men have the spirit of prophecy.

Clement was the first to obey this funereal summons. One night he had a vision of his palace in flames. Thereafter, says his biographer, "he was no longer gay, and did not last very long."

Seven months later it was Philip's turn. How did he die?

There are two versions of the story of his death. Both make it seem like the work of God's avenging hand.

The Chronicle, translated by Sauvage, relates that he died in the chase.

He saw a deer coming towards him, drew his sword, and pricked up his horse with his spurs; but instead of striking the deer, as he meant to do, he was carried by his steed straight against a tree, and with such violence that the good King fell to the earth, fatally wounded in the heart, and was taken at once to Corbeil.

At Corbeil, according to the Chronicles, his malady grew worse till he died. One might say that the malady could not well be graver.

On the other hand Guillaume de Nangis thus describes the death of the conqueror of Mons-en-Puelle.

Philip, King of France, was long afflicted with a malady, whose cause, unknown to his physicians, was a matter of surprise and wonderment both to them and to many others; though neither his pulse nor his urine indicated him to be in danger of death.

By his own desire he was at last transported to Fontainebleau, his birthplace. There, after receiving the sacrament with admirable fervor and devotion, in the presence and sight of a great number of his people, he happily surrendered his soul to his Creator, in the confession of the true and Catholic faith, in the thirtieth year of his reign, on Friday, on the eve of the Feast of Saint Andrew the Apostle.

It was not till Dante's time that a fit death was found for such a despicable man. According to that poet, Philip was gored to death by a wild boar.

He died by a boar's tusk, the robber whom we saw debasing the people's money on the banks of the Seine.

The popes who lived at Avignon after Clement Fifth, — John the Twenty-second, Benedict the Twelfth, Clement the Sixth, — waited for a chance to purchase Avignon. Such an occasion at last presented itself.

A young girl still in her minority, Jeanne of Naples, did not exactly sell Avignon to the papacy, but she gave it up, in return for the papal absolution granted to her lovers for an assassination they had committed in her behalf.

When she reached her years of majority she undertook to reclaim the territory; but Clement the Sixth held it, and held it successfully, — so successfully that when Gregory the Eleventh, in 1377, restored the seat of the papacy to Rome, Avignon was still governed by a papal legate, and remained a vassal to the Holy See.

This was the condition of things in 1791, when the events happened which are the cause of this long digression.

As in the times when Avignon was divided between the King of France, as Count of Toulouse, and the King of Naples, as Count of Provence, so in 1791 there were two Avignons in Avignon, — the Avignon of the priests, and the Avignon of the commonalty.

In the priestly Avignon there were a hundred churches, two hundred cloisters, and a papal palace. Its many bells were ready to sound an alarm or to ring for worship.

In the commercial Avignon there was a river, the Rhone, and there were silk-factories. There were two

main roads which crossed each other, one running from west to east, from Nismes to Turin, the other running from north to south, from Lyons to Marseilles.

In this unfortunate town it might be said there were two sorts of French people, — the King's French and the Pope's French.

The Frenchmen of France were French indeed and in truth. The Frenchmen of Italy were almost Italians.

The French Frenchmen — that is, the traders and artisans — had to give themselves entirely to business, and work hard for the sustenance of themselves and their families; and then they hardly succeeded in their efforts.

The Italian French — that is, the ecclesiastics — had all the riches and power. They were the priests, the bishops, the archbishops, and absentee cardinals, off duty, — idle, elegant, bold, immoral ladies' men. They were masters among the women of the people, who knelt before them to kiss their white hands as they passed along the streets, and whom they misled practically and doctrinally. Among the higher classes they were gallants among the titled dames and autocrats of the salon.

Do you wish for a type of this class of priests?

Take the handsome Abbé Maury. He was a Franco-Italian of that sort, if one ever lived. He was the son of a shoemaker, but he was as aristocratic as Duke Lauzun, as haughty as Clermont Tonnerre, as saucy as any lackey.

Commonly, in all regions, children love those who live about them. This they do naturally before they become adults, and develop strong masculine and feminine passions. At Avignon, on the contrary, children were born with hatred in their souls.

On September 14, 1791, — while the Constitutional Assembly was still in session, — a royal decree was issued

which united (or reunited, rather) Avignon and the whole County of Venaisin to the Kingdom of France.

During the year previous Avignon had been sometimes in the hands of the French party, and sometimes in the hands of the Anti-French party.

The storm burst forth in 1790. One night the Papists — the Italian French — amused themselves by hanging an effigy decorated with the Revolutionary tricolor, — the red, white, and blue.

By the art of man the Rhone had been deflected from its ancient course, for purposes of traffic and manufacture. The Durance had also been made navigable. Barriers had been constructed to restrain the swift destructive streams which were liable to rush from the heights of Ventoux, in the thawing days of spring. But when once the living human torrent in Avignon broke through its bounds, who could check its headlong and turbulent course?

All Avignon was in commotion over the sight which that morning brought to their eyes, — an image wearing the National colors, yet dangling like a criminal at the rope's end. Out of the Patriotic homes of Avignon came the people, clamorous with rage.

Four Papists, suspected of this indignity, were dragged from their houses, — two noblemen, one tradesman, and one mechanic, — and all four were hanged in place of the manikin. This was on June 11, 1790, just before the great Federation at Paris.

The French party had for its leaders two young men, Duprat and Mainvielle, and an older man, named Lescuyer.

Lescuyer was a Frenchman, in the fullest sense of the term. He was from Picardy, and possessed the opposite characteristics of impulsiveness and deep reflection. At

Avignon he was established as a notary, and served as the secretary to the municipality.

These three chiefs raised some troops, two or three thousand perhaps, and with them made an expedition against Carpentras, — an expedition which did not well succeed.

A shower of ice-cold rain, mingled with hail, — such as sometimes falls from Mount Ventoux, — dispersed the forces of Mainvielle, Duprat, and Lescuyer, as the northern tempest dispersed the famous Invincible Armada, which Philip the Second sent against England in the days of Good Queen Bess.

What caused this miraculous shower, powerful enough to scatter the Revolutionary army? The Madonna!

Remember, dear reader, that Avignon was like Italy, where miracles were the daily bread of life. As Italy was both poetic and chivalrous, everything must have some reference to the Madonna. If there were no real miracles, some must be invented; for the mind, the heart, the tongue of Italy were filled with these two words, *Miracle* and *Madonna*. However, Duprat, Mainvielle, and Lescuyer, so strongly suspected a Catelan, one Chevalier Patus, of having efficaciously seconded the Madonna in her miracle, that they credited him with all the honor thereof.

At Avignon justice was sometimes wreaked upon treason. They often killed traitors. Patus was killed!

Now who made up the army representing the French party? Peasants, porters, deserters.

They searched for a man to command these common men. Such a man they thought they found in Matthew Jouve, who preferred to be called Jourdan. He was born at Saint Just, near the town of Puy in Velay. He was first a muleteer among the steep hills near his native

town. Next he was a soldier, but without any experience of war, which might have humanized him. Then he kept a wineshop in Paris. At Avignon he traded in madder, so much used by the clothmakers and dyers.

He was a braggart of murders, a boaster of crimes. He displayed a big sabre, wherewith he said he had cut off the head of the Governor of the Bastille the year before, and also of the two royal bodyguards at Versailles on the Sixth of October.

Half in jest, half in fear, the people added the name of Headsman to the surname of Jourdan which he claimed.

Duprat, Mainvielle, Lescuyer, and their General Jourdan Headsman remained so long in control of the city that people began to be less afraid of them.

A widespread conspiracy was formed against them, a conspiracy crafty and mysterious, as are all priestly conspiracies. Religious fanaticism was roused against the Revolutionists.

The wife of a French Patriot gave birth to an armless babe. A rumor was circulated that the father had once broken off the arms of a silver angel which he was confiscating by night from a church. This imperfect child was therefore a token of the just vengeance of offended Heaven.

The father was obliged to hide, or they would have cut him in pieces, without even asking when and from what church, if any, the angel had been stolen.

Everywhere the Madonna seemed to protect Royalists, whether they were called Papists in Avignon, or called themselves Chouans (brown owls) in the distant province of Brittany.

In 1789 the Madonna in a church on the Rue Bac began to weep.

In 1790 she appeared behind an old oak-tree, in the Bocage (thicket) of the department of Vendée.

In 1791 she dispersed the troops of Duprat and Mainvielle, by driving sleet into their faces.

Lastly, in the church belonging to the Cordelier Monks at Avignon, she was seen to blush, doubtless with shame over the religious indifference of the inhabitants of the city.

This last miracle, attested by all the women,—the men had no great faith in it,—had already lifted the public mind to a great height, when a far different rumor spread throughout Avignon.

A great chest of valuables had been carried outside the town. This roused public curiosity. By the next day there was no longer one chest; there were six. By the second day it was said that eighteen full chests had been carried away.

What treasure did these eighteen coffers contain? Property belonging to Mont de Piété (Mount of Piety, or Pity), the government pawnshop. A porter let out the secret that the French party meant to evacuate Avignon, and wished to take these valuable pledges with them.

At this news a storm of wind passed through the city. This wind was the famous Avignon cry of *zou-zou*, heard in every popular outbreak,—a cry which was like a cross between a tiger's roar and a snake's hiss.

Everybody was so poor in Avignon (outside the ecclesiastical party) that nearly every family had some article in pledge at the great pawnshop; and robbery of its stores meant the robbery of the poor, of the fatherless and the widow. However small the forfeiture, everybody felt himself ruined. The rich are ruined by the loss of a million francs, the poor by the loss of a rag. All is relative.

This outbreak was on October 16, 1791. As it was Sunday morning, all the peasants of the neighborhood had come to Mass in the city. At that period everybody went armed; consequently all were ready for a fight. The moment was well chosen.

The game, moreover, was cleverly played. It appeared to be no longer a question between the French and Anti-French parties, but public sentiment was roused against robbers, — robbers guilty of the infamous crime of stealing from the poor.

The rabble rushed into the Cordelier church. Peasants and porters, white, red, and tricolored in politics, shouted for the municipal officers to at once publish their brokerage accounts, through their secretary Lescuyer.

Why did the popular wrath vent itself on Lescuyer? Nobody knows. When a life is to be violently sacrificed, there is always some fatal haphazard in the selection.

Suddenly Lescuyer was brought into the middle of the church. He was seeking a shelter in the townhouse when he was recognized and arrested, — no, not arrested, but driven into the church by kicks and cuffs and blows. Once inside the church, the unfortunate man, pale but nevertheless cool and calm, mounted a pulpit, and undertook to justify himself.

One would suppose it easy to do so by saying: "Open the storehouse, and let the people see for themselves that all the articles which we are accused of stealing are still there in safety."

Instead of this he began as follows: "My brethren, I believe the Revolution necessary, and have therefore aided it with all my might —"

They let him go no farther, for his enemies feared he would justify himself. He was interrupted by the terrible *zou-zou*, harsh as the awful storm known as

the *mistral*, the northwest wind of the Mediterranean Sea.

A porter sprang up behind him into the pulpit, and threw Lescuyer down into the crowd. From that moment the tallyho of death was sounded.

They dragged him towards the altar. It was there the Revolutionist was to be butchered, for such a sacrifice must be acceptable to the Madonna, in whose name all this was going on. In the chancel, still alive, he escaped from the hands of his assassins, and took refuge in one of the canonical stalls behind a desk.

Some charitable hand passed him something to write with, as if he could write what he had not time to speak.

Unexpected aid gave him a brief respite. A Breton gentleman, who was on a journey to Marseilles, accidentally entered the church, and was seized with pity for the poor victim. With the courage and foolhardiness of a Breton he tried to save him. Twice or thrice he thrust aside the knives and clubs raised to strike Lescuyer, and called out: "Gentlemen, in the name of the law! Gentlemen, in the name of honor! Gentlemen, in the name of humanity!"

Then the knives and clubs were turned upon the Breton himself; but in the very thick of the assault he shielded poor Lescuyer with his body and still shouted: "Gentlemen, in the name of humanity!"

At last the rabble, tired at being so long kept from their prey, seized upon the gentleman himself, and dragged him along, intending to hang him; but three men rescued the stranger and shouted: "Let us finish with Lescuyer first. We can find this other fellow any time."

The scoundrels acknowledged the justness of this

reasoning, and let the Breton alone. Then his rescuers forced him to save himself. His name was Monsieur de Rosély.

Lescuyer had no time to write. Even if he had time for it, his billet would not have been read. The tumult was too great.

In the midst of this tumult Lescuyer noticed a little door of egress behind the altar. If he could reach this door he might yet be saved. In a second, when they supposed him crushed by terror, he darted towards this door.

So surprising was this unexpected movement that he nearly reached the door; but there, at the very foot of the altar, a ribbon-maker struck him such a terrible blow with his club that the club was broken. Lescuyer fell stunned, like an ox beneath the sledge-hammer. He rolled just where they had wished him to be, — to the base of the altar.

Then, as if to punish the lips which had uttered blasphemous cheers for Liberty, the women cut and slashed those lips into strips; while the men, with that grim humor for which Southern France has sometimes been noteworthy, danced on his body, and crushed him with stones like Saint Stephen, singing the while with fiendish joy.

“Pardon, my brothers! Mercy, my sisters! In the name of humanity, in the name of the Virgin above, let me die!” This was the prayer which came from his lacerated lips.

This was asking too much; for the rabble meant that their victim should live in agony.

This went on till evening. For five hours the mangled victim lay there beneath the altar, suffering the agonies of death, while brutal jeers and laughter surged about him.

This is the news which reached the National Assembly in response to the philanthropic speech made by Fauchet.

It is true that very different intelligence came a day later.

Duprat and Jourdan were notified as to what was going on. Where could they find their scattered forces?

Duprat had an idea, — to sound the alarm on that famous silvern bell, which was rung only on two occasions, — the death or consecration of a pope.

It gave forth a strange and mysterious sound, rarely heard. This sound produced two entirely opposite effects. It chilled the hearts of the Papists. It gave courage to the Revolutionists.

At the sound of this bell, an unfamiliar tocsin, the country folks who were in the city rushed out of it, and fled to their several homes.

By this silvern alarm Jourdan was able to get together some three hundred soldiers. He took possession of the city gates, and left a hundred and fifty men to guard them.

With the other one hundred and fifty he marched upon the Cordelier church. He had two pieces of artillery. These he brought to bear upon the rabble, shooting and killing at random.

Then he entered the church. The church was deserted; but Lescuyer lay moaning at the feet of the Virgin, — the Madonna who had done so many miracles, and even blushed, but did not deign to stretch forth her divine arm to rescue this wretched man. It seemed as if he could not die. That bloody heap of flesh, one mass of wounds, still clung to life.

As they bore him through the streets, the people everywhere closed their windows as the escort passed

by ; and they shouted : “ I was n’t there at the Cordelier church ! ”

Jourdan, with his one hundred and fifty men, could have crushed Avignon, and its thirty thousand inhabitants, so great was the general cowardice. They did, on a small scale, what Marat and Panis did at Paris, on a large scale, on September 2, 1792.

By-and-by it will be seen why we say Marat and Panis, instead of Marat and Danton.

Jourdan and his men drove seventy or eighty unfortunate victims into the pontifical dungeons in the Tour de la Glacière, — a name which indicates their dismal and icy comfort, — the Trouillas Tower, as it is called in those parts.

Such was the news which reached Paris, and caused Lescuyer’s death to be forgotten in the darkness of such awful reprisals.

As to the emigrants, whom Brissot defended, and to whom he wished to throw open the doors of France, let us see what they busied themselves about in foreign parts.

They reconciled Prussia with Austria, and made friends of these natural-born enemies.

They persuaded Russia to forbid the French ambassador from showing himself in the streets of Saint Petersburg, and sent a minister to the refugees at Coblenz.

They compelled Berne to punish an old Swiss for singing the Revolutionary song, *Ça ira*.

They persuaded Geneva, the birthplace of Rousseau, — who had done so much for the Revolution which was still in the process of evolution in France, — to direct its cannon against that country.

They compelled the Bishop of Liège to refuse to receive the French ambassador.

All this was brought about by the Royalist refugees; but other things foreign governments did on their own account against the interests of France.

Russia and Sweden returned to Louis Sixteenth, with the seal unbroken, the despatch in which he announced his adhesion to the Constitution.

Spain also refused to receive it; and delivered into the hands of the Inquisition a Revolutionary Frenchman, who only by suicide evaded the torture known as the San Benito, whereby delinquents are arrayed in yellow gowns, decorated with black and grotesque figures, and then delivered to the arm of the civil power, for the punishment of the stake.

Venice threw into Saint Mark's Square the corpse of a man strangled in the night, by order of the Council of Ten. On the breast of the dead man was a scroll with this inscription:

Strangled as a Free Mason.

The Emperor of Germany and King of Prussia responded to the French King's missive, but they did so with a menace:

We desire that this may be a warning as to the necessity of taking serious precautions against the renewal of a condition of things which makes such deplorable results possible.

In the Vendée, — that is, on the Atlantic coast of France, along the Adour River, — there was civil war. The Vendéans, wedded to the old régime, were in arms against the Revolutionary Government; and they were assisted by the Chouans, who were smugglers or Royalists, as best served their turn, and probably took their *owlish* name from the warning signal which was imitated

from that bird, and which they used to give notice when the enemy was nigh.

There was also a local civil war at Avignon.

As for foreign wars, they were on every side.

From the other side of the Atlantic came the cries of the entire population of an island, who were being slaughtered.

What was happening over there in the West? Who were these black slaves, weary of stripes, who were taking their turn at killing? They were Saint Domingo negroes, entering on a bloody revenge.

How did this state of things come about? In two words, — that is, in a less prolix fashion than we have been led into in reference to Avignon, for Avignon has decidedly carried us off our feet, — in two words, we will explain the situation.

The new Constitution promised freedom to the negroes.

Ogé, a young mulatto, — one of those brave hearts, as earnest and devoted as any I have ever heard of, — recrossed the seas, carrying with him the decree of emancipation as soon as it was voted.

Although the official sanction of these decrees had not yet been sent to the West Indies, in his haste for freedom Ogé clamored for the Governor to proclaim liberty to the oppressed.

The Governor ordered Ogé's arrest, and Ogé sought a refuge in the Spanish part of the island.

The Spanish authorities, — we know full well how Spain felt about the Revolution, — the Spanish authorities gave him up. Ogé was broken alive on the wheel.

This torture was followed by terror among the whites, who supposed he had many accomplices in the island. The planters made themselves the judges, and executions multiplied.

One night sixty thousand negroes rose in an insurrection. The whites were awakened by an immense conflagration, sweeping over their plantations. A week elapsed before the fire was quenched in blood.

What could France do, poor salamander, thus encircled with fire? We shall see!

CHAPTER XXXIII.

WAR.

IN his splendid and energetic speech about the refugees, Brissot clearly exposed the intentions of the European sovereigns, and the sort of death they kept in reserve for the French Revolution.

Would they attempt to fight it down? No, they would stifle it!

Then he pictured the European league. He depicted a circle of sovereigns, some of them sword in hand, frankly flinging to the breeze their banners of hate; the others covering their faces with mantles of hypocrisy, till they should feel strong enough to unmask.

After thus describing the situation Brissot said: "Well, so be it! Not only do we accept the challenge of monarchical Europe, but we anticipate it. We will not wait for the attack. We will make the attack!"

At this appeal an immense burst of applause greeted the orator.

Being a man of instinctive intuition, rather than a man of genius, Brissot had expressed a most fervent thought, and his words echoed the deep-seated idea of duty which had guided France in the elections of 1791, — war! — not a war of egotistical vanity, instigated by a despot, in revenge for some insult to his throne, his name, his allies, or waged for the purpose of adding another submissive province to his kingdom or empire; but a war which carries with it the breath of life, — a

war whose clarion-blasts everywhere seem to say: "Arise, ye who would be free! We bring you liberty!"

The world began to hear a great murmur, which rose and increased, like the roar of the sea.

This murmur was the undertone of thirty millions of minds, which had not yet spoken out plainly, but were already muttering deeply; and this growling Brissot voiced by his words: "We will not wait for the attack! We will make the attack!"

When these threatening words met with a universal national response, France was strong, — able not only to attack, but to conquer. There remained only questions of detail to be considered.

Our readers are already aware that this is a historic work which we are making, rather than a romance. We shall never probably recur again to this great epoch, to which are related two stories already published, "*Blanche de Beaulieu*" and "*Chevalier de Maison-Rouge*," — and one other story, written three years ago, but not yet published, which will most certainly appear, however, in due season.

We ought briefly to explain the occurrences embraced in that epoch. Nevertheless we must pass rapidly over minor questions, in order to promptly reach those events which remain to be described, with which the personages in our book are particularly concerned.

The recital of the events in the Vendée, of the massacre at Avignon, of the insults from various European countries, came like thunderbolts upon the Legislative Assembly.

On October 20 Brissot was contented to propose the imposition of a tax on the property of refugees. On the twenty-fifth Condorcet urged the confiscation of their goods, and also the exaction of the civil oath. Think of

asking such an oath from men living outside France, and in arms against her !

This brought forward two Deputies, one of whom became the Mirabeau of the new Assembly, and the other its Barnave. These two able men were Vergniaud and Isnard.

Vergniaud was one of those poetic characters, tender and sympathetic, which Revolutions always bring to the surface. A native of fertile Limoges, he was mild, moderate, and affectionate, rather than passionate. Well and happily born, he was singled out by Turgot, the Intendant of Limousin, and placed in important positions at Bordeaux. His utterances were less acrid, less powerful than Mirabeau's. Although inspired by Greek literature, and somewhat surcharged with mythology, he was less prolix and less partisan than Barnave.

What made his eloquence vivacious and influential was the humane tone which forever vibrated within it. At the Assembly, in the midst of his sublimest and most indignant appeals from the rostrum, his breast always sent forth the accents of nature and piety. The leader of an aggressive, noisy, disputatious party, he always rose calmly and majestically above the situation, even when that situation was critical or even fatal.

Vergniaud's enemies called him undecided, unstable, and generally indolent. They inquired the whereabouts of his soul, which seemed ever to be absent. They were right. His soul was never under his own control, unless he made an effort to bind it within his breast. His whole heart was with a woman, — straying over her lips, coming to the light through her eyes. Only in the harp of the beautiful, the good, the charming Candeille did his soul vibrate with life.

Isnard was the opposite of Vergniaud. If Vergniaud

was the Tranquillity of the Assembly, then Isnard was its Wrath.

Born at Grasse, in the country of perfumes and gales, he had the hasty and choleric temperament of that giant of the air, the *mistral*, which in the same breath uproots the rocks and pets the roses.

His voice, previously unknown, broke upon the Assembly like one of those unexpected thunderclaps which usher in the earliest storms of summer. At the first accent of his tongue, all the members of the Assembly were impressed. The most preoccupied among them trembled like Samuel, when he heard the voice of Jehovah, and was ready to say : " Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth ! "

Somebody presently interrupted him.

" I ask the Assembly, I ask France, I ask the world, — I ask *you*, Monsieur," — and he pointed to the member who had spoken, — " I ask if there is anybody, who, in good faith, in the secret recesses of his conscience, will maintain that the emigrant princes are not conspiring against their country. In the second place, I ask if there is any one in the Assembly who dares maintain that the man who conspires against his country ought not to be immediately indicted, arrested, and punished. If there is such an one, let him stand up ! "

After an impressive pause he resumed his speech.

" We are told that strength should be indulgent, that certain great national powers are disarming ; but I say unto you, Watch ! Despotism and Monarchism are neither dead nor asleep. If the nations sleep an instant, they will awake in chains. The most unpardonable crimes are those which aim to restore men to bondage. If the lightnings of heaven were in the human grasp, they should strike those who molest popular liberty."

This was the first time such words had been uttered

within those walls. Isnard's savage eloquence carried everything before it, as the Alpine avalanche drags trees, herds, shepherds, and houses in its downward course.

Before the session ended, the following decree was voted :

That if Louis Stanislaus Xavier, a French Prince commonly called *Monsieur*, does not return within two months, he shall forfeit his claim to the Regency.

On November 8 another vote was passed :

Those refugees who do not return by January 1, 1792, will be declared guilty of conspiracy, and will be liable to arrest and punishment by death should they return thereafter.

On November 29 came the turn of the priesthood.

The civil oath must be taken before the expiration of eight days.

Those who refuse to take it will be regarded as ripe for revolt, and recommended to the watchguard of the authorities.

If they live in a community where there are religious disturbances, the Directory of the Department may cause their removal from their ordinary places of residence.

If they disobey, they shall be imprisoned for a year or more. If they incite others to disobedience, they shall be imprisoned for two years.

If it becomes necessary to maintain an armed force in any community, that community must defray the expenses thereof.

Churches must be used only for forms of worship supported by the state. Churches not needed for this purpose may be sold for other religious uses, but not to persons who refuse the oath of Constitutional allegiance.

The municipalities shall send to the departments, and the departments shall transmit to the Assembly, full lists both of those priests who do and those who do not take the oath, with notes as to any conspiracy which may exist between priests

and refugees, in order that the Assembly may be advised as to the best means of extirpating rebellion.

The Assembly looks with approval upon such writings as tend to enlighten the people as to questions ostensibly religious. Such works shall be printed, and their authors recompensed.

We have already shown what became of the Constituents, — or Constitutionals, as they were formerly called, — the members of the defunct Constituent Assembly. We have shown with what object the Feuillant Club was founded. The spirit of both these parties was wholly in accord with the disposition of the leaders of the Department of Paris. This was the spirit of Barnave, Lafayette, Lameth, Duport, and also of Bailly, who was still Mayor, though his term was nearly ended.

In the decrees against the priests, — decrees which they said were contrary to the public conscience, — and in the decrees against the refugees, — which they said were inimical to family bonds, — these conservative politicians saw a means of testing the King's authority.

A protest against these edicts was prepared by the Feuillants and signed by the Directory of Paris, in which Louis the Sixteenth was specially asked to veto the decree concerning the priesthood.

It will be remembered that the Constitution reserved to the King the right of veto.

Who signed this protest? The man who had been the first to attack the clergy, — that Mephistopheles whose clubfoot had broken the ice of opposition to the vested rights of the clergy, in whose ranks he belonged. This was Talleyrand, a man whose example makes it evident that the magnifying-glass of diplomacy does not see clearly in revolutionary times.

The rumor of this royal veto was spread abroad prematurely.

The Cordeliers pushed forward Camille Desmoulins, that free lance of the Revolution, who was ever ready to couch his spear against any fair game.

He also prepared a petition; but as he was liable to sputter when he tried to speak, he asked Fauchet to read it for him.

Fauchet read it; and it was applauded from end to end.

It would be difficult to treat the question with more irony, and at the same time more profoundly. He was Danton's friend, and the college comrade of Robespierre. This is what he said:

We do not complain, either of the Constitution for giving the King the power of the veto, or of the King for using that power. We recall the maxim of that great politician Machiavelli: "Even if the Prince ought to renounce his sovereignty, his subjects would be too cruel, too unjust, if they should blame him for persistently opposing the general will, inasmuch as it is contrary to nature that a man should voluntarily fall from a higher station to a lower."

Penetrated with this truth, taking the example of God himself, whose commandments are never impossible, we should not exact from the ex-sovereign an impossible love for the popular sovereignty of the Nation, and we should not take it ill of him if he affixes his veto to the best edicts of the Assembly.

As we have said, the Assembly applauded, adopted this declaration, decreed its insertion in the official report, and sent that report to the departments.

That night the Feuillants were in commotion. Many members of the club, though also members of the Assembly, had not been present at the session.

The next day those who had been absent the day before were in their places at the Assembly. They

numbered two hundred and sixty. Amid a storm of howls and hisses from the galleries, the edict of the day before was annulled.

This meant war between the Assembly and the Feuillants, and led the Assembly to lean more and more upon the New Jacobins, represented by Robespierre, and the Cordeliers, represented by Danton.

Danton constantly gained in popularity. His monstrous head began to show itself above the crowd. A giant Adamastor, he towered in the path of royalty to say : "Beware! The sea which thou art navigating is called the Sea of Tempests!"

Suddenly the Queen came to the aid of the Jacobins against the Feuillants.

The animosities of Marie Antoinette were, to the Revolution, what squalls and flurries are to the great Atlantic.

Marie Antoinette hated Lafayette, — Lafayette, who had saved the royal family at Versailles on October 5, 1789, and lost his popularity, for the sake of the Court, by firing upon the populace on July 17, 1791.

Lafayette wished to succeed Bailly as Mayor of Paris. Instead of helping Lafayette, the Queen advised the Royalists to vote in favor of Pétion, — strange blindness! — of Pétion, her brutal companion during the return from Varennes!

On December 19 the King presented himself at the Assembly, bringing his veto of the decree against the priesthood.

The evening before, there had been a serious demonstration at the Jacobin Club.

A Swiss named Virchaux, from Neuchâtel, — the same man who, at the Champ de Mars, wrote out the petition for a republic, — offered the society a Damascus sword,

destined for the first general who should win a victory over the enemies of liberty.

Isnard was there. He took the sword from the young Republican, drew the blade from its sheath, and sprang to the platform, crying out: "Behold the sword of the exterminating angel! It will be victorious! France will lift up her great voice and the nations will reply. The earth will be covered with warriors. Freedom's foes will be blotted from the list of mankind!"

The prophet Ezekiel could not have preached better.

The drawn sword was never replaced in its sheath. Twofold hostilities were declared, at home and abroad.

The Neuchâtel Republican's sword was first to smite the King of France, and then the kings of other lands.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

A MINISTER AFTER MADAME DE STAËL'S OWN HEART.

GILBERT had not seen the Queen since the day when she begged him to wait for her an instant in her room, and then left him, in order to listen to a political scheme, brought from Vienna by Monsieur de Breteuil, and couched in the following terms:

Treat Barnave like Mirabeau. Gain time, by swearing to support the Constitution, and by executing it to the letter, so as to show its impracticability. France will cool off and get weary. The French are feather-brained. They will take up with some new fad, and Liberty will go its way; or if Liberty is not forgotten, a year will be gained, and in a year we shall be ready for war.

Six months had rolled away since that date, and it was now in the winter of 1791-1792. Liberty had not been forgotten; and evidently foreign sovereigns were preparing to fulfil their promises and be ready for war.

One morning Gilbert was astonished to receive a visit from one of the royal chamberlains. At first Gilbert thought the King must be ill, and had sent for him professionally.

The chamberlain reassured the Doctor, and said he was simply wanted at the palace.

Gilbert insisted upon knowing who wanted him; but the chamberlain, doubtless acting under instructions,

would only repeat his formula, that Gilbert was "wanted at the palace."

Gilbert was warmly attached to the King; whereas he pitied Marie Antoinette more as a woman than as a queen. She inspired him with neither love nor devotion, but moved him to deep compassion.

Gilbert hastened to obey the summons, and was introduced into the basement story, where Barnave had formerly been received.

In an armchair a lady was waiting, who rose when she saw Gilbert.

He recognized Madame Elizabeth, for whom he had great respect, well knowing the angelic goodness of her heart.

Gilbert bowed, at once taking in the situation. Neither the King nor Queen wishing to send for him in their own names, they had evidently made a convenience of Madame Elizabeth.

So he imagined; but her first words suggested that he was wrong in his conjectures.

"Monsieur Gilbert," she said, "I know not if others have forgotten the marks of interest which you displayed towards my brother at the time of our return from Versailles, two years ago, and towards my sister, on our return from Varennes last summer; but I, for one, remember these services."

Gilbert bowed and said: "Madame, God has chosen, in his wisdom, to give you all the virtues, even those of memory and gratitude, — rare virtues in these days, especially with crowned heads."

"You surely do not say that of my brother, Monsieur Gilbert? My brother often talks of you, and greatly values your experience."

"As a physician?" asked Gilbert, smiling.

"As a physician, — yes, Monsieur ! but he believes your experience may be useful for the King's health and the kingdom's at the same time."

"The King is very kind, Madame. For which patient am I now summoned ?"

"It is not the King who has summoned you, but myself," said she, blushing a trifle ; for her pure spirit could not tell an utter falsehood.

"You, Madame ? Oh, your health need not trouble you in the least. Your pallor arises from fatigue and anxiety, not from disease."

"You are right, Monsieur, and it is n't for myself I tremble, but for my brother. He worries me very much indeed, Monsieur."

"And myself also !" responded Gilbert.

"But our anxiety does not probably come from the same source. I must tell you that what disturbs me is the King's health."

"The King is ill ?"

"No, not exactly ! but he is depressed, discouraged. Listen ! It is now ten days, — you see I count by days, — it is now ten days since he has spoken a single word, except with me. Even in his customary game of backgammon he only speaks such words as are indispensable to the game."

"It is now eleven days," said Gilbert, "since he went to the Assembly with his veto. Why did he not become speechless on the morning of that day, instead of losing his tongue the day after ?"

"Did you then suppose," said Elizabeth, with alacrity, "that my brother could sanction such an impious decree ?"

"My opinion is, that to put the King in the same boat with the priesthood, in the face of the rising sea and the

coming storm, is to compel King and priesthood to be overwhelmed in the same deluge."

"But in the place of my poor brother, what would you do?"

"Madame, there is now one political party which is growing as rapidly as that gigantic afrite of which we read in the Arabian Nights story. He was at first enclosed in a small casket; but in the hour after the casket was opened he expanded a hundred-fold."

"You speak of the Jacobins, Monsieur?"

Gilbert shook his head. "No, I refer to the Girondists, — so named, because their leaders come from the department of France called the Gironde. The Jacobins do not wish for war. The Girondists demand it. War is a national affair."

"War? War with whom? My God, — war with our brother the Emperor? — with the King of Spain, our nephew? Our enemies, Monsieur Gilbert, are in France, not outside; and in proof of it —"

Madame Elizabeth hesitated. "Speak, Madame!" said Gilbert.

"I do not know, in truth, how to tell you, Doctor; and yet it is precisely for this that I have sent for you."

"You can trust me, Madame, as a man ready to give his life for the King."

"Monsieur, do you believe there is an antidote to poisons?"

Gilbert smiled. "A universal antidote? No, Madame! Every poisonous substance has its own antidote; although it must be said, in a general way, that these antidotes are powerless."

"Oh, my God!"

"In the first place, it is necessary to know whether the poison is vegetable or mineral. Usually mineral

poisons take hold of the stomach and other digestive organs, while vegetable poisons affect the nervous system. The mineral poisons excite and inflame the parts they affect, while the vegetable poisons stupefy. Of what poison do you speak, Madame?"

"Listen, for I am telling you a great secret, a very great secret, Monsieur."

"I am listening, Madame."

"I fear they are trying to poison the King."

"Whom do you suppose guilty of such a crime?"

"This is what has happened. You know the Superintendent of the Civil List, Monsieur Laporte?"

"Yes, Madame!"

"Well, Monsieur Laporte has warned us that a man who belongs in the royal household, and is also connected with a pastry-cook's establishment in the Palace Royal, is a frightful Jacobin, and has been heard to say openly, that it would be a great thing for France if somebody should poison the King."

"Generally, Madame, people who wish to commit such crimes do not boast of it in advance."

"Oh Monsieur! but it would be so easy to poison the King. Fortunately, the man whom we distrust only has charge of the pastry in the palace."

"You have taken some precautions, Madame?"

"Yes. It has been decided that the King shall eat only roasted meats; that bread shall be brought from Ville d'Avray by Monsieur Thierry, the Superintendent of the Petits Appartements, who at the same time is to furnish the wine. As to pastry, as the King likes it, Madame Campan has received orders to buy it as if for herself, sometimes at one shop and sometimes at another. We have been advised to be on our guard especially against powdered sugar!"

"Because arsenic can be more readily mixed with it, without being noticed?"

"Precisely. It was the Queen's habit to sweeten her water with this sugar, but this custom we have entirely discontinued. The King, Queen, and myself eat together. We dispense with the constant attendance of the servants. If anything is needed, we ring for it. While we are at table Madame Campan, by a private entrance, brings in the bread, pastry, and wine. We hide these things under the table, and pretend to drink the wine from the cellar, and the bread and pastry baked purposely for us. That's the way we live; and we tremble all the time, the Queen and I, lest we should see the King suddenly turn pale, and hear him say that he is in pain."

"First," said the Doctor, "let me say that I take no stock in these threats of poison. Nevertheless, I put myself entirely at the disposal of their Majesties. What does the King wish? Does he wish me to have a chamber in the palace? I could do so, and thus be on hand for any moment I might be needed, until the King's fears —"

"Oh, my brother fears nothing," said Madame Elizabeth, quickly.

"I was wrong, Madame. I should have said, until *your* fears are over. I have had some experience with poisons and antidotes. I will hold myself in readiness to fight the poison, whatever its nature; but permit me to add, Madame, that the King, if he so chooses, will soon have nothing to fear."

"How can that be brought about?" said a voice which did not belong to Madame Elizabeth, and whose resonant and positive tones made Gilbert look around. The Doctor was not mistaken. That voice was the Queen's.

Gilbert bowed and said: "Madame, is it needful to repeat to the Queen my protestations of devotion, just now made to Madame Elizabeth?"

"No, Monsieur, no. I have heard all. I wish chiefly to know what disposition you still maintain towards us."

"The Queen doubts the stability of my sentiments?"

"Oh, Monsieur! So many heads and hearts have been alienated from us by this boisterous wind, that one scarcely knows who is trustworthy!"

"And is it for this reason that the Queen accepts, from the Feuillant Club, a minister recommended by Madame de Staël?"

The Queen started as she said: "You know that?"

"I hear that your Majesty is making arrangements with Monsieur de Narbonne."

"And I suppose you blame me?"

"No, Madame! As well make this effort as some other. When the King has tried everything else, perhaps he'll end where he ought to have begun."

"You are acquainted with Madame de Staël, Monsieur?" asked the Queen.

"I have that honor, Madame. When I left the Bastille I was presented to her by Monsieur Necker, her father, from whom I learned that my arrest and imprisonment had been at the Queen's instigation."

The Queen reddened perceptibly, and then said, with a smile: "We once agreed not to revert to that error."

"I do not recall the error, Madame! I only reply to the question the Queen has deigned to put to me."

"What think you of Monsieur Necker?"

"He's a worthy German, composed of heterogeneous elements. He is more than eccentric, and sometimes rises to the point of bombast."

"Yet were you not one of those who urged the King to take him again into government service?"

"Right or wrong, Necker was the most popular man in the kingdom; and therefore I urged the King to avail himself of that popularity."

"And Madame de Staël?"

"Am I to understand that your Majesty honors me by asking my opinion of Madame de Staël?"

"Yes."

"Well, as to her physique, she has a large nose, coarse features, a large waist —"

The Queen smiled. As a woman, it was not disagreeable to hear it said that the lady of whom she so often thought was not handsome. "Go on!" was all she said.

"Her skin is not very attractive. Her gestures are energetic, rather than graceful. Her voice is coarse, so that it sometimes seems as if it did not belong to a lady. In spite of all this she is only twenty-four or twenty-five years old. She has the throat of a goddess, magnificent black hair, superb teeth, a passionate eye. Her glance is a world in itself."

"But morally, intellectually, — as to talent and merit?" the Queen asked eagerly.

"She is good and generous. No one can remain her enemy after hearing her talk fifteen minutes."

"I refer to her genius, Monsieur. Politics require something more than the heart."

"Madame, the heart does no harm, even in politics. As to that word *genius*, which you first used, be very chary with that word. Madame de Staël has great, immense talent, but it does not reach the point of genius. Something heavy as well as strong, clumsy as well as powerful, weighs down her feet when she wishes to quit the earth. Between herself and her teacher, Jean Jacques

Rousseau, there is the difference you find between iron and steel."

"You speak of her talent as a writer, Monsieur. Speak of the lady in her political capacity."

"In my opinion, Madame," replied Gilbert, "they value Madame de Staël beyond her merits. Since the emigration of Mounier and Lally, her parlors have become the headquarters of the English party, half Aristocratic, and preferring two legislative bodies, the Lords and Commons. As she belongs to the middle class, and most decidedly so, she has the insular weakness of adoring great noblemen. She admires the English people, because she believes they are eminently aristocratic. She does not know the whole history of England. She is unacquainted with the machinery of its government. Gentlemen who have only recently risen from the lowest classes, she mistakes for noblemen whose titles antedate the Crusades. In other nations they try to sustain and strengthen the nobility with new men and new blood. In England they use the old families to maintain the new men."

"You believe that this sentiment leads Madame de Staël to propose Narbonne for a prominent place?"

"In this instance two passions are united, love of aristocracy, and love of an aristocrat."

"You think Madame de Staël loves Monsieur de Narbonne because of his aristocratic connection?"

"It is not because of his merit, I fancy!"

"But nobody is less a born aristocrat than Monsieur de Narbonne. Even his father is unknown"

"Ah!—because nobody dares look straight at the sun!"

"See here, Monsieur Gilbert, I'm a woman, and consequently I like gossip. What is said about Narbonne?"

"That he is brave, witty, profligate."

"But I refer to his birth."

"They say that when the Jesuits were trying to drive away Voltaire, Machault, Argenson, — the so-called Philosophic School, — it was necessary to contend also with Madame de Pompadour. This is what we learn from the traditions of the Regency, which preceded your Majesty's reign. They knew the possibilities of paternal love, when doubled by love of another sort. So they chose for this purpose, — for the Jesuits have a skilful hand in drawing such lots! — they chose a daughter of the King, and persuaded her to devote herself heroically to this incestuous task. Hence the generation of this charming cavalier, whose father is unknown, as your Majesty says, — not because his birth is lost in obscurity, but because it is as clear as the sunshine."

"Then you do not believe, like the Jacobins, — like Robespierre, for example, — that Narbonne comes from the Swedish embassy, of which De Staël is chief?"

"Oh yes, Madame; only he comes from the wife's boudoir, not from the husband's cabinet. To suppose that Monsieur de Staël had anything to do with this, would be to suppose him the husband of his wife. — Oh, my God, no! This is not the treachery of an ambassador, Madame, it is the weakness of lovers. Nothing less than love, the eternal fascinator, would lead a woman to place the gigantic sword of the Revolution in such frivolous hands."

"Do you speak of the sword which Monsieur Isnard kissed at the Jacobin Club?"

"Alas, Madame! I speak of the sword which is suspended over your head."

"Then in your opinion, Monsieur Gilbert, we are wrong in accepting Narbonne as Minister of War?"

"You will do better, Madame, if you at once take his successor."

"And who is that?"

"Dumouriez."

"Dumouriez, — a Soldier of Fortune?"

"Ah, Madame! that is a grand name gone wrong, ruined by bad usage, — a cowardly word! and it is an unfair epithet, as applied to him of whom you speak."

"Wasn't Monsieur Dumouriez once a simple soldier?"

"I know very well, Madame, that Monsieur Dumouriez lacks that Court distinction, those titles of birth, to which everybody bows down. A provincial gentleman, unable to purchase a colonelcy and a regiment, he enlisted as a simple hussar. At the age of twenty he endured the sword-thrusts of five or six cavaliers, rather than surrender; but in spite of this manifestation of bravery, despite his genuine intelligence, he was allowed to vegetate in the lower ranks of the army."

"His intelligence? Yes, it was developed by espionage, in his service as a spy for Louis the Fifteenth."

"Why use the words *espionage* and *spy* in regard to him, to indicate what you call *diplomacy* in others? I happen to know that it was purely at the instance of the prime-minister of Louis the Fifteenth that Dumouriez entered into correspondence with the King. Where is there a Court noble who would not do as much?"

"But, Monsieur," said the Queen, showing her deep study of politics by her familiarity with the details, "he is essentially immoral, this man whom you commend. He lacks principle, and has no sentiment of honor. Monsieur de Choiseul himself told me that Dumouriez unfolded to him two projects in relation to the Corsicans, — one to subdue them, the other to give them liberty."

"True! but Choiseul forgot to tell you that when the

first was preferred, Dumouriez fought valiantly for its success."

"If we should accept Dumouriez for Minister of War, this would be equivalent to a declaration of hostilities against Europe."

"Well, Madame, that declaration is already made in the popular heart. Do you know how many citizens of this department have already registered their names as volunteers? Six hundred thousand! In the Jura district the women declare that all the men may go, and that if the women can have pikes, they will defend their territory themselves."

"You use a word which always makes me tremble," said the Queen.

"Excuse me, Madame," replied Gilbert, "but will you tell me which word, in order that I may not again pain you by its use?"

"You used that word *pikes*! Oh, the pikes of Eighty-nine! I can still see the heads of my two faithful bodyguards on the ends of those pikes!"

"Yet it is a wife, a mother, who proposes to open a subscription, in order to have more pikes manufactured."

"Is it also a wife and a mother who has persuaded the Jacobins to adopt the red caps, — the color of blood?"

"There again your Majesty is in error. It was desirable to consecrate the ideas of Equality and Fraternity by a symbol. It would be impossible to persuade all the French people to wear similar costumes; so it was determined to select a single article of dress, — the peasant-cap. The color was chosen, not because it is the mournful color of blood, but, on the contrary, because red is a gay and striking color, agreeable to the masses."

"Well, Doctor, you are such an advocate of new inventions, that I do not despair of yet seeing you with

a pike in your hand, and a red cap on your head, feeling the King's pulse."

The Queen spoke half bitterly, half jestingly, and then withdrew, seeing that she could not overcome this man at any point.

Madame Elizabeth was preparing to follow her, when Gilbert said, in almost supplicating tones: "Madame, you love your brother, do you not?"

"It is more than love I feel for him,—it is adoration!"

"And you are willing to transmit good counsel to him, if it comes from a friend?"

"Speak out! If the counsel is really good —"

"From my point of view it is excellent."

"Then speak, speak!"

"Well, when the Feuillant ministry comes to nothing, — and that won't be long, — advise him to select a ministry composed wholly of men wearing those red caps, which alarm the Queen so much!"

Then, bowing low before Madame Elizabeth, Gilbert left the room and the palace.

CHAPTER XXXV.

DUMOURIEZ.

WE have reported the foregoing conversation between the Queen and Doctor Gilbert, in order to interrupt the course, always somewhat monotonous, of a historic recital, and to set forth, in a form less bald than a chronologic table, the situation of the various political parties.

The Narbonne ministry lasted three months. One of Vergniaud's speeches killed it.

Mirabeau once exclaimed: "I see from here the window!"

In like manner, when the news arrived that the Empress of Russia had made a treaty with Turkey, and that Austria and Prussia had signed, at Berlin, on February 7, a compact of alliance offensive and defensive, — when this news arrived, Vergniaud mounted the rostrum and said: "I too may say, that from this platform I can see the palace wherein they are plotting a counter-revolution, and preparing measures which will enslave us to Austria. The time has come when you must put an end to such audacity, and confound the conspirators. Often enough, in the olden days, have Terror and Dismay stalked forth from yonder palace, in the name of Despotism. Now let Terror and Dismay re-enter that palace, in the name of the Law."

By a powerful gesture this magnificent orator seemed to drive before him Terror and Dismay, those two demoralized daughters of Awe and Majesty.

Dismay and Terror did indeed return to the Tuileries. Narbonne, elevated to office by a puff of amorous admiration, was overturned by a tempestuous flaw. This downfall occurred in March, 1792.

Hardly three months had elapsed after Gilbert's interview with the Queen, when a new man was introduced into the King's presence. He was short in stature, active, nimble, nervous. He had an intelligent head, in which sparkled eyes full of enterprise. He was fifty-six years of age, though he appeared ten years younger. His face was overspread with the brown tints of the bivouac, and he wore the uniform of a field-marshal.

He was only an instant alone in the parlor, into which he was shown; for at once the door opened and the King entered.

For the first time these two historic personages found themselves face to face. The King regarded the little man with a dull and heavy look, which was nevertheless not devoid of penetration. The little man returned the King's glance with one full of defiance and fire.

Nobody was there to introduce the stranger, which proved that his coming had been announced beforehand.

"It is Monsieur Dumouriez?" asked the King.

Dumouriez bowed.

"How long is it since you came to Paris?"

"I came at the beginning of February, Sire."

"Monsieur de Narbonne sent for you—?"

"To tell me that I was detailed to the army corps in Alsatia, under Marshal Luckner, and that I was to command the Besançon division."

"You did not go, however?"

"Sire, I accepted the commission; but I believed it my duty to suggest to Narbonne that as war was at hand,"—here the King made a perceptible movement,

but Dumouriez did not appear to notice it, — “and threatened to become general, I thought it would be better to pay more attention to Southern France, which was unprepared for an attack; and that consequently it seemed to me important that a plan of defence should be adopted for the lower districts, and that a general-in-chief and an army should be sent there.”

“Yes, and you unfolded your views to Narbonne, after having communicated them to Monsieur Gensonné and to several other Girondists?”

“Gensonné is my friend, Sire, and also a friend to your Majesty, I believe.”

“Then I’m doing business with a Girondist, am I?” said the King, smiling.

“You have to do with a Patriot, and a faithful subject of his sovereign.”

Louis bit his big lips and said: “And was it for the sake of serving your sovereign and country more efficiently that you refused an appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs *pro tem*?”

“Sire, I responded that I should prefer the command promised me, rather than a place in the cabinet, either *pro tem* or not *pro tem*; for I am a soldier, and not a diplomat.”

“On the contrary, I am assured that you are both a soldier and a diplomat.”

“I am too much honored, Sire!”

“And it is under that assurance that I still insist upon the appointment,” said the King.

“Yes, Sire! and I continue to refuse, despite my great regret at disobeying you.”

“And why do you refuse?”

“Because the situation is grave, Sire. It has already upset Narbonne and compromised Monsieur de Lessart.

Every man, who thinks anything of his own capability, has the right not to let himself be employed in any way whatever, or else to insist that he shall be employed according to his value. Now, Sire, I am either worth something or nothing. If nothing, leave me in my obscurity. Who knows to what destiny you are driving me? If I am worth anything, do not try to make me the minister of a day, a passing power; but give me some definite support, so that you can then lean more securely on me. Our affairs — your pardon, Sire, for making his Majesty's affairs my own — our affairs are in such a bad odor with foreign lands, that a temporary Council cannot properly deal with other nations. Such a temporary arrangement, a ministry *pro tem*, — excuse the frankness of a soldier!" — nobody could be less frank than Dumouriez, but under certain circumstances he liked to appear so — "this arrangement would affect the Assembly badly, and destroy my popularity with its members. I will say further, that this *pro tem* business would compromise the King, and give him the appearance of clinging to his old Council, which he meant to recall at the first opportunity."

"Do you think the move would be possible, even if I cherished such an intention?"

"I believe it is time for your Majesty to break with the past in good faith."

"Yes, and make myself a Jacobin outright, perhaps? You said as much to Laporte!"

"Zounds! If your Majesty should do that, it would embarrass all parties, — the Jacobins most of all."

"Why don't you advise me to put on the red cap at once?"

"Well, Sire, if that would help matters —" said Dumouriez.

The King looked in a somewhat defiant way at the man who could begin such a response ; but he only said : " Then it's a permanent portfolio you wish for, is it, Monsieur ? "

" I wish for nothing, Sire. I am ready to receive the King's orders ; only I should like it better, if the King would send me to the frontier, instead of keeping me in Paris."

" And if I command you, on the contrary, to remain in Paris, and become definitely the Minister of Foreign Affairs, what should you say ? "

Dumouriez smiled. " I should say that his Majesty was overcoming the prejudice with which others had inspired him against me."

" Well, yes, entirely so, Monsieur Dumouriez. You are henceforth my Prime Minister ! "

" Sire, I devote myself to your service ; but — "

" Some conditions ? "

" Some explanations, Sire ! "

" Speak ! I'm listening."

" The place of Prime Minister is not what it was formerly. Without being the less your Majesty's faithful servant, yet, in entering your cabinet, I become a National executor. Do not expect of me, hereafter, the language to which you have been accustomed from my predecessors. I only know how to speak according to Liberty and the Constitution. Confined by my official duties, I cannot pay my court to you. I shall not have much leisure, and I shall disregard the King's etiquette, in order better to serve the King himself. I shall work constantly for you or your Council ; and I forewarn you, this work involves conflict."

" Conflict, Monsieur ? Why so ? "

" Oh, it's very plain, Sire ! Nearly all your foreign

representatives are openly hostile to the Revolution. I forewarn you that I shall change them, and may go contrary to your selections and preferences. I may propose to your Majesty nominees whom you do not even know by name, and others whom you dislike — ”

“ And in that case, Monsieur ? ” said Louis, interrupting him hastily.

“ In that case, Sire, when your Majesty’s repugnance is too strong and outspoken, I shall obey, because you are master ; but if your selections emanate not from your own choice, but are suggested by those around you, and seem evidently intended to compromise me, then I shall beg your Majesty to appoint my successor. Sire, think of the awful dangers which beset your throne. It must be buttressed by public confidence, and all depends upon you ! ”

“ Permit me to interrupt you, Monsieur. ”

“ Sire — ! ” said Dumouriez, bowing.

“ I *have* thought of these dangers for a long time ! ”

Then, pointing to the portrait of Charles the First, and wiping his face with his handkerchief, Louis continued : “ And if I try to forget them, there is a picture which keeps them in mind. ”

“ Sire ! ”

“ Wait till I’ve done, Monsieur. My situation is the same as his. Our perils are similar. Perhaps the scaffold of Whitehall is even now building itself in the Place de Grève. ”

“ This is looking too far ahead, Sire ! ”

“ It is looking at the horizon, Monsieur ! If my fear be correct, I shall march to the scaffold as Charles did, — not perhaps in so knightly a fashion, but at least in a Christian way. — Now go on, Monsieur ! ”

Dumouriez paused, astonished at this unexpected

display of firmness ; but presently he said : "Sire, allow me to change the theme of our conversation?"

"As you will, Monsieur ; but I wish to prove that I am not afraid to meet the fate with which they try to affright me ; or, if I do fear it, that I am prepared to face it."

"Sire, despite all I have had the honor of saying to you, am I still to regard myself as your Minister of Foreign Affairs?"

"Yes, Monsieur."

"Then at the first meeting of the Council I shall introduce four despatches. I warn the King that neither in style nor principles will they resemble those of my predecessors. If my initiatory efforts are acceptable to your Majesty, I shall keep on ; otherwise my travelling equipage is in readiness for my departure, to serve France and my sovereign on the frontier. Whatever may have been said of my talents as a diplomatist, the field is my true element, the aim of all my endeavors for the past six and thirty years."

Thus speaking he bowed, and was about taking his leave, when the King checked him. "Wait a moment ! We have settled one point, but there are five others to adjust."

"My colleagues?"

"Certainly. I do not mean to have you coming to me with complaints that you are hindered by this man or that. Choose your cabinet, Monsieur."

"Sire, you impose upon me a grave responsibility."

"I believe I best serve your wishes by charging you with this duty."

"Sire, I know scarcely anybody in Paris, except Lacoste, whom I recommend to your Majesty for the Naval Department."

"Lacoste? Isn't he merely a chief commissary?"

"Yes, Sire, — one who sent his resignation to Monsieur de Boynes, rather than pursue an unjust course."

"That's a good recommendation! Whom do you propose for the other places?"

"I will consult others, Sire."

"May I know whom you will consult?"

"Brissot, Condorcet, Pétion, Rœderer, Gensonné —"

"All the Girondists, in fact?"

"Yes, Sire!"

"Ho for the Girondists, then! Let us see if they can manage better than the Constitutionalists and the Feuillants."

"There is another point, Sire!"

"What is it?"

"To ascertain whether the four letters which I am to write will be agreeable to you."

"That we shall learn to-night."

"To-night, Sire?"

"Yes, for matters are driving! We are to have an extraordinary meeting of my Council, composed of Monsieur de Grave, and Monsieur Cahier de Gerville."

"But Duport du Tertre?"

"He has resigned."

"I shall be at your Majesty's disposal," said Dumouriez, again bowing and about to withdraw.

"No, wait a minute. I want to compromise you." Hardly were these words out of his mouth when the Queen and Madame Elizabeth appeared, with their prayerbooks in their hands.

"Madame," said the King to his wife, "this is Monsieur Dumouriez, who promises to help us, and with whom we are this evening to form a new Council."

Dumouriez bowed, and the Queen looked with curiosity

at the man who was to wield such an influence in the affairs of France.

"Monsieur," she said, "are you acquainted with Monsieur Gilbert?"

"No, Madame."

"Better make his acquaintance, Monsieur."

"May I ask in what capacity you recommend him?"

"As an excellent prophet. Three months ago he predicted that you would be Narbonne's successor."

At this moment the doors of the King's study were thrown open, and he went out to attend Mass.

Dumouriez followed in the royal train; but the courtiers avoided him as they would a pestilence.

"Didn't I say you would be compromised?" whispered the King, laughing.

"In the eyes of the aristocracy, Sire! This is a new favor which the King bestows upon me!" and so speaking, he at last succeeded in getting away.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

BEHIND THE TAPESTRY.

ON that evening, at the hour named, Dumouriez came with the four despatches. Grave and Cahier de Gerville were already in the Council Chamber, awaiting the King.

As if the King himself only delayed his coming till Dumouriez's arrival, hardly had this gentleman entered by one door, before his Majesty came in by the other.

The two retiring ministers rose quickly. Dumouriez was already standing, and could only bow. The King responded with a nod. Then he said, as he took an armchair at the head of the table: "Gentlemen, be seated."

It seemed to Dumouriez that the door into the King's private room had been left open, and that the portière in front of it moved slightly. Was it the wind? Was it the touch of some person listening behind the tapestry, which intercepted sight but not sound?

The three ministers sat down.

"Have you your despatches, Monsieur?" asked the King, of Dumouriez.

"Yes, Sire!" and the General drew four letters from his pocket.

"To what national powers are they addressed?" asked the King.

"To Spain, Austria, Prussia, and England."

"Read them!"

Dumouriez again glanced at the tapestry, and its tremor convinced him that somebody was listening.

He began his reading in a firm voice. In these despatches he spoke in the name of the King, but in the spirit of the Constitution, — without acrimony, but also without feebleness.

He discussed the true interests of each government in its relation to the French Revolution. As each government might reasonably complain of the utterances in certain Jacobin pamphlets, he attributed these injurious misrepresentations to the freedom of the press, under whose sunshine, while rich harvests were ripening, impure vermin might also be warmed into life. In conclusion he demanded peace in the name of a free nation, whereof the King was the hereditary representative.

The King listened, and gave increasingly close attention to each successive despatch.

When Dumouriez had finished his reading, the King said: "I never before heard anything equal to this, General!"

"It is thus ministers ought always to write and speak in the names of their sovereigns!" said Cahier de Gerville.

"Well," resumed the King, "give me the despatches, and they shall go to-morrow."

"Sire, the couriers are already waiting in the courtyard below" said Dumouriez.

"I wish to have duplicates for safe keeping, and to show to the Queen," said the King, with some little embarrassment.

"I have anticipated your Majesty's wish, and here are four copies, certified to be genuine, by myself."

"Then let your missives be sent!" said the King.

Dumouriez went to the door by which he had entered.

An aide was in waiting, to whom he gave the despatches. Presently they heard several horses galloping out of the courtyard.

"That is done!" said the King, in response to his own thoughts, when this significant sound had died away; "and now let us see your list of colleagues."

"Sire," said Dumouriez, "I wish first of all that your Majesty would urge Monsieur Cahier de Gerville to consent to remain with us."

"I have already done so," said the King.

"And I regretfully persist in my refusal, Sire. My health is being undermined day by day, and I need rest."

"You hear, Monsieur," said the King, turning towards Dumouriez.

"Yes, Sire!"

"Well," insisted the King, "your ministers?"

"We have Monsieur de Grave still with us."

Grave raised his hand and said: "Sire, if the language of Monsieur Dumouriez astonished you just now by its frankness, mine will astonish you still more by its humility."

"Speak, Monsieur!" said the King.

"Here, Sire," replied Grave, drawing a paper from his pocket, "here is a somewhat severe but fair criticism made upon me, by a lady of great merit. Have the kindness to read it."

The King took the paper and read as follows:

Grave is spoken of for the War Portfolio. He is a small man in every way. Nature has made him mild and timid. His prepossessions lead him into superciliousness, albeit his heart inspires him with amiability. As a result, in an embarrassing effort to conciliate all parties, he becomes absolutely nothing.

Methinks I see him walking like a courtier behind the King, his head erect and his body weak, showing the whites of his blue eyes, which he cannot keep open after dinner, without the aid of three or four cups of coffee.

He talks little, as though his reserve were instigated by wise reticence; but in reality this silence arises from a lack of ideas. He will lose his head so completely in the midst of the affairs of his department, that one day or other he must ask permission to withdraw.

Louis hesitated about reading the paper through, and would not have done so except by the request of Monsieur de Grave himself.

"Well," said his Majesty, "there's a woman's estimate. Is it from Madame de Staël?"

"No, better than that. It is from Madame Roland, Sire."

"And you say, Monsieur de Grave, that this is also your judgment of yourself?"

"In many points, Sire!—I will remain in the ministry until I can instruct my successor as to the run of affairs, and then I must ask your Majesty to accept my resignation."

"You were right, Monsieur. This language is yet more astonishing than the language of Monsieur Dumouriez. If you are resolved upon withdrawal, however, I should be glad to have you nominate your successor."

"I was about to beg your Majesty to allow me to suggest Monsieur Servan, an honest man, in every sense of the word, a man of solid temperament and pure morals, with something of the austerity of a philosopher, added to the sympathetic goodness of a woman. Besides, Sire, he is a clear-headed Patriot, a courageous soldier, a vigilant politician."

"Here goes for Servan! We have three secretaries

then already, — Servan for War, Lacoste for the Navy, Dumouriez for Foreign Affairs. What shall we do about Finance?"

"Monsieur Clavières, Sire, if you approve the choice. He is a man of great financial knowledge, and superior skill in the management of money." So spake Dumouriez.

"Yes," said the King, "he is indeed active and industrious; but they also say he is irascible, self-opinionated, fussy, and wayward in discussion."

"These are the common faults of able cabinet-ministers, Sire."

"Well, we'll overlook the shortcomings of Monsieur Clavières. So be it! Monsieur Clavières, Minister of Finance. Now how about Justice? To whom shall we give her?"

"Duranthon, a Bordeaux barrister, is very strongly recommended."

"By the Girondists, of course?"

"Yes, Sire. He is a level-headed, upright, and most excellent citizen, but somewhat weak and slow. We must light a fire under his feet, and supply the strength he lacks."

"There still remains one portfolio, — Interior Affairs."

"The unanimous opinion is that it belongs to Monsieur Roland."

"To Madame Roland, you mean?"

"To Monsieur and Madame Roland, — to both the learned husband and the brilliant wife!"

"You know them?" asked the King.

"No, Sire; but I am assured that he resembles one of Plutarch's heroes, while she is a woman from the pages of Titus Livius."

"Do you know what they will call your cabinet,

Monsieur Dumouriez, or rather, what it is already nicknamed ?”

“No, Sire.”

“The Sans Culotte¹ Ministry.”

“I accept the appellation, Sire. All the better will it be seen that we are men.”

“And are your colleagues all ready for duty ?”

“Half of them are not aware of their appointment.”

“Will they accept ?”

“I’m sure of it.”

“Very well, let us adjourn ; and day after to-morrow we will hold our first session.”

“Day after to-morrow, Sire !”

“You see,” said the King, turning to Grave and Cahier de Gerville, “that you will have till the day after to-morrow for reflection and suggestion.”

“Sire, our determination is already taken, and we will come on the day after to-morrow only to install our successors.”

The three ministers retired, but before they reached the broad staircase a chamberlain overtook them, and said to Dumouriez : “Monsieur General, the King requests you to follow me, as he has something to say to you.”

Dumouriez saluted his colleagues, and remained behind to ask : “The King or the Queen ?”

“The Queen, Monsieur ; but she judged it inexpedient to let the other two gentlemen know that it was she who sent for you.”

Dumouriez shook his head and said : “Just what I feared !”

¹ This term means *breechless*, or *unbreeched*, — literally, *without breeches*, — and might be translated *tatterdemalion* or *ragamuffin*. It was applied to the Republicans by the Nobility, to indicate their opinion as to the Plebeian character of the ultra Revolutionary party.

"Do you refuse?" asked the chamberlain, who was no other than Weber.

"No, I'm with you."

"Come this way."

Through the poorly lighted corridors the chamberlain conducted Dumouriez to the Queen's apartments, and then said, without announcing the General by name: "Here is the person your Majesty asked for!"

Dumouriez entered. Never had our soldier's heart beat so violently, even when executing a battle-charge or mounting the deadly breach.

As he well understood, this was because he had never before encountered the same danger. The road which now opened before him was strown with dead and living sacrifices. At any moment he might stumble against the memory of Calonne, of Necker, of Mirabeau, of Barnave, of Lafayette.

The Queen was pacing the room with long steps, and she was very red. Dumouriez paused just inside the door, which was closed behind him. The Queen came towards him with a majestic and irritated demeanor.

At once taking up the question, with her usual vivacity, she said: "Monsieur, at this moment you are all-powerful; but you are so by the favor of the people, and the people quickly break their idols. They say you have much talent. First of all, have the wit to understand that neither the King nor myself will sanction all these new notions. Your Constitution is a perfect air-pump, an exhauster. Royalty suffers under it for want of air. I have sent for you to say, before you go any farther, that you must decide what part you will take, and choose between us and the Jacobins."

"Madame, I am grieved at the painful communications which your Majesty makes; but having detected the

presence of the Queen behind the curtain which concealed her, I expected what now comes to pass."

"In that case, you are ready with your answer?" said the Queen.

"Here it is, Madame. I am between the King and the Nation; but before all, I belong to my country."

"The country! the country!" repeated the Queen. "The King then is nothing! Everybody apparently cleaves to the Nation, and nobody to the King."

"Oh yes, Madame, the King is always the King; but he has taken an oath to support the Constitution, and from the day when that oath was taken, the King became one of the chief subjects of the Constitution."

"A compulsory oath, Monsieur,—null and void."

For an instant Dumouriez stood speechless. Like the skilful actor he was, he looked at the Queen with profound pity.

At last he said: "Madame, permit me to say that your safety, the King's safety, and that of your august children, is bound up with the Constitution which you undervalue, and which will save you, if you will consent to be saved thereby. I should ill serve you, Madame,—I should ill serve the King,—if I talked to either of you otherwise."

The Queen interrupted him with an imperious motion. "Oh Monsieur, Monsieur! You are on the wrong road, I assure you." Then she added, with an undefinable touch of menace: "Be on your guard, Monsieur!"

"Madame," responded Dumouriez, in a perfectly calm tone, "I am more than fifty years old. My life has been beset with perils. In accepting the Portfolio of State I have said to myself that my official responsibility is by no means the greatest danger into which I run."

"Oh!" cried the Queen, striking her hands together,

"there is only one thing left for you to do, — slander me!"

"Slander you, Madame?"

"Yes. Do you wish me to explain your last words?"

"Do so, Madame!"

"Well, you implied that I was capable of assassinating you. — Oh Monsieur! —" and as she spoke, two great tears fell from her eyes.

Dumouriez had gone as far as possible. He had learned what he wished to know, — that is, if a single sensitive fibre remained at the bottom of her seared heart.

"God forbid," he said, "that I should so insult my Queen. Your Majesty's character is too great, too noble, to suggest such a suspicion, even to her most obdurate enemies. She has given proofs of heroism which I admire, and which have drawn me towards her."

"Do you speak the truth, Monsieur?" asked she, with tones in which emotion alone remained.

"On my honor, Madame, I swear it!"

"Then pardon my error, and give me your arm; for there are moments when I am so weak that I feel as if I should drop."

Indeed she did turn pale, and threw back her head.

Was this real? Was it one of those enticing perilous bits of comedy, not uncommon with this seductive Medea?

Cunning as he was, Dumouriez let himself be caught; or else, a more subtle actor than the Queen, he pretended to be deceived.

"Believe me, Madame, I can have no motive for deceiving you; for I abhor anarchy and its crimes as much as you do. Believe me, for I speak from my

experience. I am better situated than the Queen for estimating events. What is now taking place is not some Orleans intrigue, as some would have you believe. It does not emanate from Pitt's animosity, as you have sometimes imagined. It is not even a transient popular movement. It is the almost unanimous protest of a great nation against ancient abuses. In all this, as I know very well, there are great animosities, which are liable to start a conflagration. Let us leave miscreants and fools on one side. Let us see only our Nation and our King, in this Revolution. What tends to separate these two, the Crown and the Nation, leads to mutual ruin. As for myself, Madame, I have undertaken, with all my might, to reunite them. Help me, instead of working against me! You dislike me? Am I an obstacle to your Counter Revolutionary projects? If so, tell me, Madame. The King shall have my resignation on the spot, and I will sit in a corner, and mourn the fate of your country and mine."

"No, no! Keep your office, and pardon me!"

"I—pardon you, Madame? Oh, I beseech you not to humiliate yourself thus."

"Why not humiliate myself? Am I any longer a queen? Am I any longer a woman, even?"

She went to the window and pushed it open, notwithstanding the coldness of the March evening. The moon was silvering the leafless treetops in the gardens below.

"All people have a right to air and sunshine, have they not? To me only are sunshine and air denied. I dare not show myself at the windows, either on the courtyard side or the garden side. Day before yesterday I looked out into the courtyard. A gunner, who was there on guard, insulted me grossly, and said he should like the fun of carrying my head on the end of his bayonet.

Yesterday I opened the window looking towards the garden. On one side I saw a man standing on a chair, and reading aloud horrible things about us. On the other side I saw a priest insulted, beaten, and dragged away to one of the ponds. As if such scenes were of everyday occurrence, other people were all this time playing ball and promenading serenely, not troubling themselves about priest or speaker. — What times, Monsieur! What a situation! What people! And you wish me to believe myself a queen, when I can hardly believe myself a woman.”

The Queen threw herself on a sofa, hiding her head in her hands. Dumouriez bent his knee, and respectfully kissed the hem of her robe.

“Madame,” he said, “as surely as I undertake to sustain this struggle, you shall become once more a happy woman. You shall again become a powerful sovereign, or I will give up my life in the effort.”

Rising, he saluted the Queen, and hurriedly left the room.

With an air of despair the Queen watched his withdrawal, repeating to herself: “A powerful sovereign? Perhaps that is yet possible, thanks to the sword; but a happy woman? Never, never, never!”

Murmuring a name which day by day became dearer and sadder, — the name of Charny, — she buried her head among the cushions on the sofa.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE RED CAP.

DUMOURIEZ withdrew rapidly from the Queen's presence, partly because her despair was painful. Though seldom moved by sentimental ideas, he was strongly affected by personal contact. There was no sentiment in his political conscience, but he was very sensitive to human suffering.

Moreover Brissot was waiting to accompany him to the Jacobin meeting, and Dumouriez did not wish to delay his submission to that terrible club.

As for the Assembly, he felt sure of his hold upon that body, so long as he was the choice of Pétion, Gensonné, Brissot, and the Girondists generally ; but he was not the candidate of Robespierre, Collot d'Herbois, and Couthon, and it was Robespierre, Couthon, and Collot d'Herbois who managed the Jacobins.

Dumouriez's presence was unexpected. It was an audacious move for one of the King's ministers to come to the Jacobin Club. Hardly was his name spoken, when all eyes were turned towards him.

What would Robespierre do about it ? Robespierre turned like the others, and bent his ear to catch the name flying from lip to lip. Then he knitted his brows, and again became cool and mute.

A glacial silence immediately spread through the hall. Dumouriez understood perfectly well that he must burn his vessels behind him, like the famous general who was

bound not to retreat from the foreign shore where he had landed.

The Jacobins had just adopted the red cap as a sign of equality, only three or four members being of the opinion that their patriotism was sufficiently well known without giving this outward demonstration of it. One of this small number was Robespierre.

Dumouriez did not hesitate. He flung away his hat, snatched from a Patriot, sitting near, the red cap which adorned his head, and pulled it down over his own ears. Parading this sign of equality, he then mounted the rostrum.

The entire assemblage broke into applause. In the midst of this applause a sound was heard like the hiss of a viper, and the plaudits at once suddenly died away. It was the cry of *hush*, coming from Robespierre's puny lips.

More than once, at a later day, Dumouriez acknowledged that never did the whistle of bullets, within a foot of his head, make him shudder as did that *hush*, escaping from the lips of the ex-Deputy from Arras ; but he was a rude fighter, this Dumouriez, a general and an orator rolled into one, — difficult to overthrow, either on the battlefield or on the rostrum.

He waited with a calm smile till the chill silence was fully restored, and then said, in vibratory tones : "Brothers and friends : henceforth every moment of my life will be consecrated to doing the will of the people and justifying the confidence of a Constitutional King. In my negotiations with foreign lands I shall be upheld by the strength of a free people, and these negotiations must lead either to solid peace or decisive war."

Here the applause broke out afresh, despite Robespierre's hiss.

"If we have war," continued the orator, "I will snap my political quill and take my place in the army, ready for victory or death with my brothers. A heavy burden rests on my shoulders. Brothers, aid me to bear it! I need your counsel. Let me receive it through your publications. Tell me the truth, the honest truth. Repel calumny, but do not repulse a citizen whom you know to be sincere and intrepid, and who is devoted to the Revolutionary cause."

Dumouriez was done. He came down amidst loud plaudits. These plaudits irritated Collot d'Herbois, — that speaker who was himself so often hissed, so rarely applauded.

"Why this applause?" he cried, without stirring from his place. "If Dumouriez comes hither as a cabinet-minister, there is nothing to answer. If he comes here as an affiliated member, as a brother, he only does his duty, and puts himself on the plane of our opinions. In that case, there is only one answer to make, — that he should act as he talks."

Dumouriez raised his hand, as much as to say: "That is just what I mean to do."

Robespierre rose, with his severe smile. Everybody understood that he wished to ascend the tribune, and made way for him to pass. When he deigned to speak, all others were silent; only the silence was soft as velvet, compared with that which had greeted Dumouriez. He mounted the rostrum, and began with his customary solemnity.

"I am not among those who believe it absolutely impossible for a cabinet-minister to be patriotic. I even accept, with pleasure, the assurances Monsieur Dumouriez gives us. When he accomplishes these predictions, when he overthrows the enemies armed against us by his

predecessors, and by conspirators who still direct our government, — despite the expulsion of several royal councillors, — then, and not till then, I shall be disposed to chant his eulogy. Even then I shall still think every good citizen in this society is his equal. The Nation alone is great, is worthy of respect in my eyes. The traditions of ministerial power vanish before the people. Out of respect for the people, for the minister himself, I demand that his entrance here shall not be signalized by such marks of homage, which will indicate the decay of public spirit. He asks our advice. I promise, for my part, to give him counsel which will be both useful to him and beneficial to the public weal. As long as Monsieur Dumouriez proves — by his open declarations, and above all by real service to his country — that he is the fellow of all honest citizens, and the defender of the people, he will find only support in this club. I do not fear the presence of a cabinet-secretary in this society; but the instant that secretary is treated as if he had an ascendancy over other citizens, I shall demand his expulsion; for that superiority can never be allowed.”

The astute orator left the rostrum in the midst of cheers, but a snare awaited him on the lower step. Dumouriez was there with outstretched arms, pretending great enthusiasm.

“Virtuous Robespierre!” he cried, “incorruptible citizen! permit me to embrace thee!” and despite the resistance of the old Constitutionalist, the General pressed Robespierre to his heart.

The crowd only saw the deed, and not Robespierre’s repugnance to its accomplishment. Once more the assemblage broke into applause.

“Come!” said Dumouriez to Brissot, in a low voice,

"the comedy is over! I have worn the red cap and embraced Robespierre! Now I'm doubly a saint."

Indeed he walked to the door amid hurrahs from the floor and the galleries.

At the door was a young man, clothed with the dignity of an usher, who exchanged a rapid glance with the minister, and a still more rapid shake of the hand. This young man was the Duke de Chartres.

Eleven o'clock in the evening rung out. Brissot acted as guide to Dumouriez, and both hastily wended their way towards Roland's lodgings.

The Rolands were still living in the Rue Guénégaud. They had been notified the night before, by Brissot, that Dumouriez, at the instigation of Gensonné and Brissot, wished to name Roland to the King for the Portfolio of the Interior. Brissot had asked Roland if he felt strong enough for such a task; and Roland, with his usual simplicity, had replied that, on the whole, he thought he was.

Now Dumouriez came to announce that the choice was made. Roland and Dumouriez only knew each other by name, and had never met. One can understand with what curiosity the future colleagues regarded each other.

After the customary compliments, in which Dumouriez assured Roland of his satisfaction in calling to the government such an enlightened and honest Patriot, the conversation naturally reverted to the King.

"There is the difficulty!" said Roland, with a smile.

"Well, therein you display a simplicity which I certainly have not the honor of sharing with you," said Dumouriez. "I believe the King to be an honest man and a sincere Patriot."

Observing that Madame Roland answered not a word,

but contented herself with a smile, Dumouriez asked :
"Is n't that your opinion, Madame?"

"You have seen the King?"

"Yes."

"Have you seen the Queen?"

This time it was Dumouriez who did not answer, but contented himself with a smile.

An appointment was made for the next day, at eleven in the forenoon, when the new ministers were to take their oaths of office. On leaving the Assembly, they were to go at once to the King.

It was now nearly midnight. Dumouriez would have stayed longer, but this was a late hour for plain folks like the Rolands.

Why did Dumouriez wish to remain? Ah! There it is!

By a quick glance at the husband and wife when he entered, Dumouriez noted the age of the husband. Roland was only ten years older than Dumouriez, but Dumouriez appeared twenty years younger than Roland.

The General also noted the beautiful outlines of the wife. As the daughter of an engraver, Madame Roland labored in her father's workshop when she was a maiden; and after she became a wife, she worked in her husband's study. Labor, that harsh protector, had been her safeguard as a maiden, and should have been her safeguard as a wife.

Dumouriez belonged to that race of men who can never behold an old husband without laughing, or a young woman without disobeying the commandment against covetousness. His manners were therefore displeasing to both the wife and husband, and this is why they called the attention of Brissot and the General to the lateness of the hour.

Brissot and Dumouriez both took their leave. When the door closed behind them, Roland said to his wife: "Well, my dear friend, what thinkest thou of our future colleague?"

Madame Roland smiled as she replied: "There are some men whom it is needless to see twice, in order to form an opinion about them. He has a sly character, a supple mind, a crafty look. He expressed great satisfaction with the patriotic selection he came to announce. Well, I sha'n't be surprised if he sends thee away some day."

"That's exactly my opinion!" said Roland.

Both went to bed, with their habitual serenity, neither of the two dreaming that the iron finger of Destiny was writing their names in letters of blood on the tablets of the Revolution.

The next day the new members of the royal cabinet took their oaths of allegiance before the National Assembly, and then went to the Tuileries.

Roland wore shoes with strings, probably because he had no silver to spend on buckles. He wore a round hat, for he had never worn a hat of any other sort. He went to the Tuileries in his usual attire, and happened to come last in the line of secretaries.

Monsieur de Brézé, the Master of Ceremonies, let the other five pass in, but he stopped Roland.

Not understanding why he was refused entrance, Roland said: "But I also am a minister, like the others, — Minister of the Interior!"

The Master of Ceremonies did not, however, appear at all convinced.

Dumouriez heard the debate and interfered.

"Why do you refuse admission to Monsieur Roland?" he asked.

“Ah Monsieur!” said the Master of Ceremonies, wringing his hands; “a round hat! no buckles!”

“Ah Monsieur!” replied Dumouriez, with the utmost sangfroid, “a round hat! no buckles! All is indeed lost!” and as he spoke, he pushed Roland into the King’s study.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

THE ministry which had so much trouble in getting into the King's study might well be styled the War Cabinet.

On March 1, 1792, the Emperor Leopold of Austria died in the midst of his Italian harem, slain by the aphrodisiac love-potions which he prepared for himself.

Marie Antoinette, who had one day read, perhaps in some Jacobin pamphlet, that a pastry-crust would some day bring the Emperor his just dues, — and thereupon sent for Gilbert, to ask if there was a universal antidote for poisons, — now declared openly that her brother had been poisoned by his enemies.

With Leopold, Austria's temporizing policy also died.

He who now ascended the throne was Francis the Second, with whom later generations have been well acquainted, because he was the contemporary of our fathers, as he has been of ourselves. He had in him a mixture of Italian and German blood, his father being the deceased Leopold, and his mother being Maria Louisa of Spain.

Though an Austrian, he was born at Florence in 1768, but returned to the Court of Vienna at an early age. A year or two before his accession to the throne, he married Maria Theresa of Naples.

He was weak, violent, and treacherous. According to the priestly estimate, he was an honest man. His nature

was hard and bigoted. His duplicity was concealed beneath a placid countenance. Under a rosy mask he maintained a fearful tenacity of purpose. He accomplished his career like an automaton animated by springs, —like the statue of the Commander in the opera of "Don Giovanni" or the apparition of the King in Shakespeare's "Hamlet."

In order to avoid the loss of portions of his territory, he twenty years afterwards gave his daughter, Maria Louisa, in marriage to his vanquisher, Napoleon Bonaparte; and yet, when his new son-in-law was driven back by the icy winds of the north in the retreat from Moscow, Francis Joseph hastened to stab him in the back at the first step.

In a word, Francis Second was the man whose tyranny was shown in the lead mines of Venice and the dungeons of Spitzberg. He was the executioner of Andryane, and also of Silvio Pellico, the Italian poet, who for nearly ten years was incarcerated at Spielberg, and whose charming work, "My Prisons," won him the sympathy of the reading world.

The new Emperor was at once the protector of the aristocratic refugees, the ally of Prussia, and the enemy of France.

The French ambassador at Vienna, Monsieur de Noailles, was, so to speak, a prisoner in his own palace.

Our ambassador to Berlin, Monsieur de Ségur, was preceded by the rumor that he was coming to Prussia to obtain possession of the King's secrets, by making love to the royal favorites. It so chanced that the King of Prussia had both.

Ségur presented himself during a public reception, at the same time with the envoy from Coblenz. The King turned his back upon the French ambassador; and in a

loud voice he inquired, of the messenger from the emigrant princes, as to the health of the Comte d'Artois.

Prussia believed herself at that epoch, as she believes herself to-day, at the head of German progress. Prussia lived amidst the peculiar philosophical traditions of King Frederick, who aided the Turkish resistance and the Polish Revolution, while he at the same time strangled the liberties of Holland. He governed with crooked fingers, which incessantly fished for spoils in the troubled waters of revolutions, hooking now a part of Poland, again a fraction of Pomerania, or a slice of Neuchâtel.

France had two avowed enemies in 1792, Francis Second of Austria and Frederick William of Prussia, the nephew of the Great Frederick, whom he had succeeded not many years before.

The secret enemies of France were England, Russia, and Spain.

The head of this coalition was to be the bellicose King of Sweden, that dwarf, armed like a giant, who was known as Gustavus the Third, and whom Catherine the Second kept under her thumb.

If we were obliged to cite our great historian, Michelet, every time we borrowed a fact from his ample pages, readers would find this honored name on almost every leaf; and from him we learn the contents of the following diplomatic note, issued soon after the accession of Francis Second to the Austrian throne,—a note intended to humiliate France. Francis claimed to be ruler of the whole German Empire, as well as the Emperor of Austria.

First. Satisfactory arrangements must be made with the German princes, who have possessions within the limits of the kingdom of France, and Austria must be supported by

France herself ; or else the imperial sovereignty of the German Empire must be recognized as in the other departments of our empire.

Second. Avignon must be given up, in order that Provence may be divided, as aforetime.

Third. The French monarchy must be re-established on the footing of June 23, 1789.

It is only too evident that these demands corresponded with the secret desires of the King and Queen of France.

One might have supposed Austria had fallen asleep on June 23, 1789, and had awakened after a slumber of three years, under the impression that only one night had elapsed, and it was now June 24, 1789.

On March 16, 1792, Gustavus of Sweden was assassinated in the midst of a masquerade ball. On the second day afterwards, while the assassination was still unknown in France, this Austrian document reached Dumouriez, who shrugged his shoulders, and carried it at once to Louis Sixteenth.

Marie Antoinette belonged to the extreme party. She desired war, because she believed it must bring deliverance to royalty ; whereas the King — who was lethargic, and given to indirection and evasion — belonged to the middle party, and dreaded a war.

If war was declared and France was victorious, the King would be at the mercy of the conquering general. In case of a defeat, the people would hold the King responsible, raise the cry of treason, and rush upon the Tuileries.

If their enemies should invade France as far as Paris, whom would they bring with them ? *Monsieur*, — that is to say, the King's brother, the hereditary Regent of the kingdom.

The deposal of Louis Sixteenth, the indictment of Marie Antoinette as an unfaithful wife, the possible declaration that the royal children of France were illegitimate, — these would be the results of the return of the aristocratic refugees to Paris.

The King had confidence in the Austrians, the Germans, the Prussians; but he distrusted the émigrés.

Nevertheless, when the Austrian note was read, it was at once understood that the hour had come when France must draw the sword, and that the King could not back out.

On April 20, 1792, the King and Dumouriez together enter the National Assembly. They bring with them a declaration of war against Austria. This declaration of war is enthusiastically received.

At this solemn hour — upon whose details Romance has not the courage to enter, preferring to leave their consideration entirely to History — there are four distinctly defined parties in France: Absolute Royalists, of whom the Queen is one; Constitutional Royalists, whereto the King professedly belongs; Republicans; Anarchists.

Apart from the Queen, the Absolute Royalists have no able leaders in France. In foreign lands they are represented by *Monsieur*, by the Comte d'Artois, by Prince de Condé, and by Duke Charles de Lorraine. Monsieur de Breteuil, at Vienna, and Monsieur Merci d'Argenteau, at Brussels, are the Queen's representatives in this party.

The leaders of the Constitutional party are Lafayette, Bailly, Barnave, Lameth, Duport, — in a word, the Feuillant Club. The King would ask nothing better than to abandon the idea of absolute monarchism, and go with the Constitutionalists; although he inclines rather to hold back than march forward.

The leaders of the Republican party are Brissot, Vergniaud, Guadet, Pétion, Roland, Isnard, Ducos, Condorcet, and Couthon.

The Anarchist chiefs are Marat, Danton, Santerre, Gonchon, Camille Desmoulins, Hébert, Legendre, Fabre d'Églantine, and Collot d'Herbois.

Dumouriez is willing to be anything anybody wants, provided he finds it for his own interest and renown.

Robespierre has retreated into the shadows. He waits!

Meanwhile, to whom shall be committed the Revolutionary flag, which that uncertain Patriot, Dumouriez, has flaunted on the rostrum of the Assembly?

To Lafayette, who bears the unenviable notoriety of causing the Champ de Mars massacre! To Luckner, who is only known to France by the mischief he did her as a partisan during the Seven Years War! To Rochambeau, who wishes only a defensive war, and is mortified by seeing Dumouriez address his orders directly to his subordinates, without submitting those orders to the criticism of Rochambeau's long experience.

Here we have the three men in command of the three military divisions, ready to enter upon this campaign.

Lafayette holds the centre. He is to rapidly follow the windings of the Meuse, and push Givet back to Namur. Luckner guards Franché Comté. Rochambeau commands in Flanders.

Supported by the detachment which Rochambeau has sent into Flanders, under the leadership of Biron, Lafayette is to capture Namur, and then march on Brussels, where the Brabant Revolution awaits him with widespread arms.

Lafayette has a fine opportunity. He is the advance guard. It is for him Dumouriez intends the first victory. That victory will make him Commander-in-chief.

Lafayette once victorious, and therefore Commander-in-chief, with Dumouriez as a successful War Secretary, the Royalists may throw the red cap to the nettles,—to the dogs, as the English might say,—and then crush the Girondists with one hand and the Jacobins with the other. Then the Counter-Revolution will be an established fact.

But Robespierre? As we have said, Robespierre has retreated into the shadow. Many go so far as to accuse him of Royalist sentiments, and pretend that there is an underground passage from the carpenter Duplay's workshop to the royal dwelling of Louis Sixteenth. Is it not from this source that the pension will hereafter come, which is to be paid, at a later day, to Mademoiselle de Robespierre, by the Duchess d'Angoulême?

This time, as always, Lafayette fails to embrace his opportunity.

The war is waged by peace-partisans. The contractors are the special friends of the enemy. They would gladly leave the troops without ammunition and without provisions, if by so doing they could supply bread and powder to the Austrians and Prussians.

Note also that Dumouriez, the man of deep intrigues and darksome tunnels, does not throw aside his relations with Orleans,—relations which will ultimately be his ruin.

Biron also is an Orleanist general. Thus the Orleanists and the Feuillants, through Biron and Lafayette, may become the first to wield the sword and sound the trump of triumph.

On the morning of April 28, 1792, Biron captures Quiévrain and marches towards Mons. The next day, April 29, Théobald Dillon rushes from Lille to Tournay.

Biron and Dillon are both aristocrats. They are hand-

some, witty, dissipated, and brave young fellows, of the school of Richelieu. The one is frank in his avowal of patriotic opinions. The other will not have time to ascertain his own opinions before he is killed.

As we have stated somewhere before, the dragoons are the arm of Royalist France.

Two regiments of dragoons are at the head of Biron's three thousand men. Suddenly these dragoons, without even seeing the enemy, begin to shout: "We are betrayed! Shift for yourselves!"

Still shouting, they wheel about, and plunge through the infantry, who flee in their turn, believing themselves pursued. The panic is complete.

The same thing happens to Dillon. Dillon encounters a corps of nine hundred Austrians. The dragoons of his advance guard get frightened, run away, and drag the infantry along with them. Abandoning artillery, wagons, and military equipage, they do not pause till they bring up at Lille, whence they started.

Then the fugitives lay all the blame of their cowardice upon their chiefs, and put to death Théobald Dillon and Lieutenant-Colonel Bertois; after which they deliver the bodies of these unfortunate officers to the populace of Lille, who hang them, and then dance about their swinging corpses.

By whom has this defeat been organized, having for its aim the awakening of hesitancy in the hearts of the Patriots, and confidence in the hearts of their enemies?

The Girondists have desired war, and bleed on both sides with the double wound thus received. Well, the Girondists (and it must be confessed that all appearances confirm the opinion) blame the Court, — that is, the Queen. Their first idea is to return Marie Antoinette blow for blow; but they have given royalty time to put

on a breastplate more solid than the chain armor the Queen once gave the King, and which her Majesty, in company with Andrée, tested one night, in an obscure corner of Versailles.

Little by little the Queen has reorganized the famous guard, authorized by the Constitution for which it was named. She has enlisted not less than six thousand men.

And what men! Fencing-masters and bullies, who insult representative Patriots, even on their benches in the Assembly; gentlemen from Brittany and the Vendée; Provençals from Nismes and Arles; robust priests, who, under the pretext of refusing to take the Constitutional oath, have thrown their cassocks to the winds, and taken up, instead of the sprinkler, the sword, dagger, and pistol. Besides all these, there are many Knights of the Order of Saint Louis, who have come from nobody knows where, and have been decorated nobody knows why.

Even Dumouriez complains of this in his Memoirs:

Whatever government may succeed the one now in power, it cannot restore to honor this Order, of whose beautiful but unlucky crosses it has been so prodigal, bestowing six thousand in two years.

It is at this time that the Minister of Foreign Affairs refuses for himself the grand cordon, and has it given to Monsieur de Watteville, a major in the Swiss Regiment of Ernest.

It is necessary first to take away this armor, and then to smite the King and Queen.

Suddenly a rumor spreads abroad that a white flag has been found at the old École Militaire, — that this flag is constantly displayed, and is a gift from the

King. This recalls the incident of the black cockade, on October 5 and 6, 1789.

Everybody is astonished, so well known are the Counter-Revolutionary opinions of the King and Queen, not to see a white flag floating on the Tuileries, and they expect to see it streaming above some other public building on any fine morning.

At the report of the discovery of this flag, the people flock to the barracks. The officers of the school set out to resist the popular invasion, but the soldiers will not help their leaders.

A white flag is indeed found, — a flag as large as your hand, — which has been stuck into a loaf of cake, sent to the school by the Dauphin.

In addition to this unimportant scrap, they find a number of hymns composed in honor of the King, and some scurrilous songs about the Assembly, besides thousands of Anti-Revolutionary leaflets.

Bazire hereupon sends a report to the Assembly. The King's Guards have broken into cries of joy on learning the defeats of Tournay and Quiévrain. They have even expressed the hope that in three days Valenciennes will be taken, and that in a fortnight a foreign army will be in Paris.

Nor is that all! A cavalier in that guard, a good Frenchman named Joachim Murat, — who entered this corps under the delusion that it was what its name indicated, the Constitutional Guard, — has tendered his resignation; and there has been an effort to bribe him with money, and then send him to Coblenz.

These Constitutional Guards form a fearful weapon in the hands of royalty. May they not, under the King's orders, march upon the Assembly, besiege the Riding School, make prisoners of the National Deputies, and

kill them all off, one after the other? Or, not so bad as that, what hinders them from taking the King, leaving Paris, and going with him to the frontier, — thus repeating the Varennes flight, which this time would not be a failure?

Accordingly on May 23, that is, three weeks after the double check at Tournay and Quiévrain, Pétion, the new Mayor of Paris, elected by the influence of the Queen, whom he had brought back from Varennes, — a man whom she befriends out of sheer hatred towards one who would have been quite willing to let her escape from France, namely, Lafayette, — Pétion sends a written order to the Commander of the National Guard, in which he openly expresses his fears as to the possible departure of the King, urges the guards to “observe and watch, and to multiply the patrols in the neighborhood.”

To watch what? To observe whom? Pétion does not say. To multiply the patrols in what neighborhood? The answer is silence.

What would be the use of saying *King* and *Tuileries* outright?

Who is to be watched? *The enemy!*

Around what shall sentinels be multiplied? *Around the enemy's camp!*

What is the enemy's camp? *The Tuileries!*

Who is the enemy? *The King!*

There you have the great question in a nutshell.

It is Pétion, a petty lawyer from Chartres, the son of a solicitor, who thus arrays himself against the King of France, — against a descendant of Saint Louis, a great-grandson of Louis the Fourteenth.

The King of France laments, for he knows that this voice speaks louder than his own. He complains in a letter, which the Directory of the Department of Paris

causes to be posted on the walls of the city ; but Pétion is not at all disquieted. He does not answer, but he maintains his order.

So Pétion is the true king. If you doubt it, you shall presently have proof of it.

Bazire's report demands the suppression of the King's Constitutional Guard, and that a warrant of arrest shall be issued against its commander, Monsieur de Brissac.

The iron is hot. The Girondists are hammering it, — strong blacksmiths as they are. For them the question arises : " To be, or not to be ? "

The decree is voted the same day. The Constitutional Guard is disbanded. The arrest of the Duc de Brissac is received, and the guardianship of the Tuileries is again placed in the hands of the National Guards.

Oh Charny, Charny ! Where art thou ? At Varennes a year ago, with three hundred cavalry, thine attempt to rescue the Queen was a failure ! but what couldst thou not do at the Tuileries, with six thousand men ?

Charny is living in bliss, forgetful of all else, in Andrée's beautiful arms.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE RUE GUÉNÉGAUD AND THE TUILERIES.

WE may perhaps recall Grave's resignation of his office as Minister of War, which was partly refused by the King and wholly refused by Dumouriez. The latter was bent on retaining Grave, because Grave was Dumouriez's ally. Indeed he did keep him in office awhile. When the news came, however, of a double check to the national arms, the Minister-in-chief felt that the Minister of War must be sacrificed.

He therefore abandoned Grave, as a sop thrown to the many-headed Jacobin Cerberus, in order to stop his barking; and in Grave's place he put Colonel Servan, ex-Tutor of the Pages, whom he at once mentioned to the King.

Undoubtedly Dumouriez did not foresee what this colleague would do, and what a blow he would aim at royalty.

While the Queen was watching on the roofs of the Tuileries, so to speak, — searching the horizon for some token of the longed-for coming of the Austrians, — another woman was also on the watch, in the little parlor in the Rue Guénégaud. The one typified the Counter-Revolution; the other typified the Revolution.

It is Madame Roland to whom our last words allude. It is she who urged Servan for the ministry, as Madame de Staël had urged Narbonne. Throughout those three terrible years, 1791, 1792, 1793, the hand of woman was everywhere.

Servan was always at Madame Roland's reunions. Like all the Girondists, of whom she was the vital breath and light, — as the nymph Egeria was to Numa Pompilius, in the establishment of the religion and laws of ancient Rome, — Servan was inspired by her valiant soul, which (like the miraculous bush of Moses) forever burned without being consumed.

It was even said that she was Servan's mistress. She let them talk on ; for having a clear conscience, she could smile at calumny.

Every day she saw her husband come home weighed down with the contest. He felt himself hurried towards destruction, with his colleague Clavières ; but as there was nothing visible to support his allegations, they might all be denied.

On the evening when Dumouriez came to tender him the Portfolio of the Interior, Roland made certain conditions.

" I have no other fortune save mine honor," he said. " I wish to leave the cabinet with that honor unstained. A recording secretary should be present at all the deliberations of the Royal Council, and note down each member's opinion, so that my record may be seen, if ever I am found wanting in patriotism and faithless to liberty."

To this Dumouriez agreed. He felt the need of covering his own unpopularity with the mantle of the Girondist name. Dumouriez was one of those men who always promise, and then keep or forget their pledges, as it happens to suit their convenience.

Dumouriez had not kept this promise, and Roland still waited in vain for his recording secretary. As Roland could not have this private record, he resorted to publicity. He founded a journal named " The Thermometer ;" but no one understood better than himself that there

would be some decisions of the Council whose disclosure would afford treasonable aid to public enemies.

The nomination of Servan came as a help to Roland, but this was not enough; for this new influence being neutralized by Dumouriez, the Council made no liberal progress.

The Assembly struck one blow, in disbanding the Constitutional Guards and arresting Brissac. On his return home with Servan, in the evening of May 29, Roland reported the news.

"What has been done with the discharged guardsmen?" asked Madame Roland.

"Nothing!"

"They are free, then?"

"Yes! only they must put away their blue uniforms."

"To-morrow they will put on the red uniform, and disport themselves as Swiss Guards."

Sure enough. The next day the streets were dotted with Swiss uniforms. The disbanded guardsmen had changed their coats, and that was all. They were there in Paris, extending a hand to foreign invaders, beckoning them to come, and ready to open to them the city gates.

For this condition of things the two men, Roland and Servan, could see no remedy. Madame Roland took a sheet of paper, put a quill into Servan's hand, and dictated to him as follows:

A proposition to establish in Paris, on account of the approaching festival of the Great Federation and the Capture of the Bastille, on July 14, an encampment of twenty thousand volunteers.

Servan dropped the pen after writing this one phrase. "The King will never consent!" he said.

"Well, it is not to the King this measure should be proposed, but to the Assembly.' Moreover, it should not be suggested by yourself as a Royal Councillor, but as a citizen."

By the gleam of this lightning-flash, Servan and Roland could see an immense horizon stretching before them.

"You are right!" said Servan. "With that, and also an edict against the priesthood, we shall hold the King."

"You understand me perfectly, do you not?" said Madame. "The priests are the Counter-Revolutionary influence in families and in society. The priesthood have added this phrase to the Creed: *and those who pay their taxes shall be damned!* Within six months fifty Constitutionally sworn priests have been slain,—their houses sacked, their fields devastated. Now let the Assembly aim a strong decree at the rebellious priests. Finish your proposal! Roland will prepare the other!"

Servan finished his document, while Roland wrote as follows:

Every rebel priest shall be taken outside the kingdom, within a month, if his removal is demanded by twenty registered citizens, approved by the district officers, and ordained by the government. Each exile shall receive three francs a day, for the defrayal of his travelling expenses as far as the frontier.

Servan read his proposition as to the proposed camp of twenty thousand volunteers. Roland read his outline of an edict for the expulsion of the priests. Therein lay the solution of the whole difficulty.

Would the King act frankly in regard to these projects? Would he act treacherously?

If the King were an honest Constitutionalist, he must

sign both these decrees. If not, he must oppose his veto.

"I will sign my proposition for a volunteer camp as if I were an ordinary citizen," said Servan.

"And Vergniaud shall propose the decree against the priests," said the husband and wife, both at once.

The next day Servan sprung his demand upon the Assembly. Vergniaud put the other paper in his pocket, and promised to bring it out at the proper time.

On the evening after he sent his proposal to the Assembly, Servan attended the Council as usual. Of course his action was under discussion. Roland and Clavières sustained it, against Dumouriez, Lacoste, and Duranthon.

"Come, Monsieur!" cried the Premier, "and give an account of your conduct."

"To whom, if you please?" asked Servan.

"To the King, to the Nation, — to me!" Servan only smiled.

"Monsieur," continued Dumouriez, "you have to-day taken a very important step."

"Yes, I am aware of it, Monsieur, — a step of the highest importance."

"Had you orders from the King for thus acting?"

"No, Monsieur! I acknowledge that I had not."

"Did you take advice from your colleagues?"

"No more than from the King. That I also avow."

"Then why did you take this step?"

"Because it was my privilege, both as a private individual and as a citizen."

"Then it was as a private citizen you presented this incendiary motion?"

"Yes!"

"Why then did you add to your signature your title as Minister of War?"

"Because I wished to show the Assembly that I am ready to support, as a public officer, what I demand as a private citizen."

"Monsieur," said the Premier, "what you have done is unworthy equally of a citizen and a royal minister."

"Monsieur," said Servan, "permit me to say that I must be the judge of all matters pertaining to my conscience; and if I seek for any other judge in a question so delicate, I promise you his name will not be Dumouriez."

Dumouriez grew pale, and took a step towards Servan. Servan grasped his sword-hilt. Dumouriez did the same.

At this moment the King entered. He was as yet ignorant of Servan's proposal, and nothing further was then said about it.

The next day the Assembly entered upon a discussion of this proposal to convene twenty thousand Federal Volunteers in Paris.

The King was in consternation over this intelligence, and sent for his Premier.

"You are a loyal servant, Monsieur," said the King, "and I know how vigorously you have taken hold of royal interests, as an offset to this contemptible Servan."

"I thank your Majesty," said Dumouriez. Then he asked, after a pause: "The King is aware that the obnoxious decree has been passed?"

"No! but that does n't matter. I have decided, in that case, to exercise my right of veto."

Dumouriez shook his head.

"Is n't that your advice?" asked the King.

"Sire," replied the Premier, "you are the target for the suspicions of the greater part of our country. You are without the means of resistance, and against you

are directed the rage of the Jacobins and the deep policy of the Republicans. Under these circumstances such a veto on your part would be equivalent to a declaration of war with the Assembly."

"Very well! So be it! I have made war upon my friends who are outside. I may as well have war with my friends inside."

"In one case you have ten chances of victory. In the other you have ten chances of defeat."

"You evidently do not understand the object of assembling these twenty thousand men "

"If your Majesty will allow me five minutes of free speech, I hope to prove that I not only know what is hoped for, but also what will come out of all this."

"Speak on! I am all attention!" said the King; and with his elbow on the arm of his chair, and his head in his hand, Louis Sixteenth listened.

"Sire, they who ask for this enactment are as much the country's enemies as the King's."

"You see," interrupted Louis, "you acknowledge it yourself!"

"I will say more, — that the accomplishment of their desires will bring them bad luck."

"Well then —"

"Permit me, Sire —"

"Yes, yes! Go on!"

"The Minister of War did very wrong to propose an assemblage of twenty thousand men near Paris, while our armies are so feeble, our frontiers so bare, and our treasury so empty."

"Wrong?" said the King. "I should say so!"

"Not merely wrong, but imprudent, — which is even worse. It will be imprudent to have such an assemblage of undisciplined troops so near the Assembly, — troops

disposed to overrate their patriotism, and liable to be brought under control by the first ambitious leader."

"It is really the Girondists who are speaking through Servan's voice!"

"Yes," replied Dumouriez, "but the Girondists will not profit by it!"

"Perhaps the Feuillants will be benefited?"

"Neither Feuillants nor Girondists, but the Jacobins, who have affiliations throughout the kingdom, and who will perhaps find nineteen thousand of their own liege members among the twenty thousand volunteers. Be certain of this, Sire, that the promoters of this edict will be overturned by the edict itself."

"If I could believe that, I should be consoled," said the King.

"I think, Sire, the decree is dangerous to the Nation, to the King, to the National Assembly, and, above all, to its authors, who will find their chastisement in their own action. Therefore my opinion is that you cannot well do otherwise than sanction it. It has been evoked by malice so profound that I venture to say there is a woman at the bottom of it!"

"Madame Roland, you mean? Why are not women content to sew and knit, instead of turning themselves into politicians?"

"What would you have, Sire? Madame de Maintenon, Madame de Pompadour, and Madame Dubarry made women lose their old habits. This decree, I say, has been instigated by deep malice, has been fiercely debated, and has been adopted with enthusiasm. Everybody is blind to the effects of this wretched decree. Even if you add your veto, the decree will be put into execution just the same. Instead of merely twenty thousand men, assembled according to law, and consequently submissive

to lawful power, at the approaching Federative Festival, forty thousand men, who have not been thus legally summoned, will flock to Paris from the provinces, — enough to upset the Constitution, the Assembly, and the Crown at one blow ! If we had been the vanquishers instead of the vanquished in our recent battles,” added Dumouriez, lowering his voice, “if I had thus found a good pretext for making Lafayette Commander-in-chief, and putting a hundred thousand men under his control, then I should not bid you sanction this decree ; but we are beaten at home and abroad, so I bid you sign it.”

Just then there was a tap at the King’s door. “Enter !” said Louis. It was the chamberlain, Thierry.

“Sire, Monsieur Duranthon, the Minister of Justice, wishes to confer with your Majesty.”

“What can he want ? See to it, Dumouriez.”

The instant the Premier left the room the tapestry which covered the door communicating with the Queen’s room was lifted, and Marie Antoinette appeared.

“Sire, Sire,” she said, “be firm ! This Dumouriez is a Jacobin, like the others. Did he not put on their red cap at the club ? As to Lafayette, as you know, I would rather be ruined outright than be saved by that man !”

As the Premier’s returning step was heard, the tapestry fell and the vision disappeared.

CHAPTER XL.

THE VETO.

As the portière fell back into its usual place the public door reopened.

"Sire," said Dumouriez, "on the motion of Vergniaud, the edict against the priests has been passed."

"It's a conspiracy!" said the King, rising. "And how was the edict expressed?"

"Here it is, Sire. Duranthon brought it to you. I thought your Majesty would do me the honor of privately giving me your opinion about it, before conferring with the whole Council."

"You are right. Give me the paper."

With a voice trembling with agitation the King read the decree, written by Roland and proposed by Vergniaud, the text whereof has already been given.

After reading it, the King crushed it in his hands and threw it away, saying: "I will never sanction such an edict."

"Excuse me, Sire, for once more having a mind opposed to your Majesty's."

"Monsieur, I may hesitate in political matters, but in religious matters, — never! In political affairs I decide with the intellect, and the intellect is fallible. In matters of religion I decide according to my conscience, and conscience is infallible."

"Sire, more than a year ago you approved the law in regard to administering the Constitutional oath to the priests."

“Ah Monsieur ! but I was forced to it !”

“Sire, then was the proper time to affix your veto. This second edict is only a natural result of the first. The first edict has produced all the evils in France. This edict is the remedy for those evils. It is severe, but not cruel. The other was an anti-religious edict. It attacked freedom of thought in matters of worship. The new law is political, and concerns only the security and tranquillity of the kingdom. It protects unsworn priests from persecution. Your veto, instead of protecting them, will deprive them of judicial aid, expose them to massacre, and force France to become their executioner. This is my opinion, Sire, — excuse a soldier’s frankness, — this is my opinion, which I venture to express, — that having endorsed the former decree, making the oath almost compulsory, your veto of the second decree, — which may prevent an impending deluge of blood, — your veto, Sire, will burden your Majesty’s conscience with all the crimes to which it may lead among the populace.”

“To what crimes will it lead, Monsieur, — to what crimes greater than those already committed ?” asked a voice from the end of the room.

Dumouriez started at the sound of this resonant voice. He recognized the Queen’s metallic and ringing accent.

“Ah Madame !” he said, “I should have greatly preferred pursuing this discussion entirely with the King.”

With a bitter smile at Dumouriez, and an almost scornful glance at the King, she said : “Monsieur, I have only one question to ask you.”

“What is it, Madame ?”

“Do you think the King ought longer to endure Roland’s threats, Servan’s knavery, and the insolence of Clavières ?”

"No, Madame," said Dumouriez. "I am as indignant as yourself on that point. I wonder at the King's patience; and if we may now grapple with that question, I shall dare to beg the King to make an entire change in his Council."

"Entire?" said the King.

"Yes, — that your Majesty will send away the whole six of us, and select advisers who do not belong to any party, — if they can be found."

"No, no!" said the King. "I wish you to remain, — you and the worthy Lacoste, and also Duranthon; but do me the favor of disembarassing me of those three insolent partisans, for I swear to you that my patience is exhausted."

"A dangerous undertaking, Sire."

"And you shrink from the danger?" said the Queen.

"No, Madame; only I must make certain conditions."

"Your conditions?" said the Queen, haughtily. The Premier bowed.

"Speak on, Monsieur!" said the King.

"Sire, I am the target of the three factions which divide Paris. The Feuillants, the Girondists, and the Jacobins all aim at me. I have become decidedly unpopular; and as it is only with the support of public opinion that one can hold the reins of government, I can be really useful to you only under one condition."

"Well?"

"Let it be said publicly, Sire, that I remain in the Council, — I and my two colleagues, — only to sanction the two edicts just passed, about the priestly oath and the military camp."

"That cannot be!" cried the King.

"Impossible! Impossible!" said the Queen.

"You refuse?"

"My most cruel enemy, Monsieur," said the King, "could not well impose upon me very much harder conditions."

"Sire, on my word as a gentleman and a soldier, I believe them essential to your safety."

Turning to the Queen, he continued: "Madame, if not for yourself,—if the intrepid daughter of Maria Theresa not only despises danger, but, following her mother's example, is ready to encounter it,—pray remember that you are not alone. Think of the King! Think of your children! Instead of pushing them into the abyss, join hands with me in holding back his Majesty from the precipice over which his throne already totters."

Then he added, speaking directly to the King: "If I judged the sanction of these two decrees advisable,—even before his Majesty expressed his desire to be rid of the factious half of his cabinet, which so weighs upon him,—the proposition to dismiss these three secretaries now makes the royal endorsement of these obnoxious decrees indispensable. If you send away these secretaries without endorsing these decrees, the people will have two motives for displeasure. They will regard you as an enemy of the Constitution, and the discharged ministers will pose as martyrs; and I will not promise that the gravest events may not imperil your crown and your life before many days. As for myself, I forewarn your Majesty that I cannot, even to serve royalty, go contrary, I will not say to my principles, but to my convictions. Duranthon and Lacoste think as I do, though I am not commissioned to speak for them. As far as I am concerned, however, as I have said, Sire,—and now I repeat it,—I cannot remain in the Council unless your Majesty signs both these new laws."

The King moved impatiently. Dumouriez started for the door.

The King exchanged a rapid glance with the Queen, who called the Premier by name.

Dumouriez paused, and she continued : " Do you realize how hard it is for the King to sanction a decree which will bring to Paris twenty thousand miscreants who would like to murder us ? "

" Madame, the peril is great, I know. That is a reason for facing it, but not for exaggerating it. The decree empowers the Executive to name the gathering-place of these twenty thousand men, — who are not all rascals, however. Moreover, it confides to the Secretary of War the appointment of the officers and the methods of organization."

" And the Secretary of War is Servan ! "

" No, Sire. From the moment of Servan's retirement, the War Secretary is myself."

" What, you ? " said the King.

" You will take the Portfolio of War ? " demanded the Queen.

" Yes, Madame ; and I hope I may be able to turn against your enemies the sword now suspended over your own heads."

The King and the Queen again exchanged consulting glances.

" Suppose," continued the Premier, " that I should name Soissons as the place of encampment, and that I should name as commander some firm and wise lieutenant-general, with two good marshals under him. They might form the men into battalions. As there would be four or five divisions, the War Secretary could avail himself of the demands of our generals in the field, and send one or more of these divisions to the frontier.

Then, as you see, Sire, this edict, though voted with bad intent, so far from being a hindrance to us, will be very useful."

"But are you sure of obtaining permission to place the camp at Soissons?" asked the King.

"Sure of it!"

"In that case, take the War Office!"

"Sire, as Minister of Foreign Affairs I have only a light and indirect responsibility. It is quite otherwise with the Department of War. Your generals are my enemies. You have already learned their weakness. I shall be held responsible for their faults; but as this concerns your Majesty's life, as well as the safety of the Queen and your august children, and the maintenance of the Constitution, I accept the burden. We are therefore agreed on one point, — the endorsement of the edict about the twenty thousand volunteers?"

"If you are Secretary of War, I confide myself entirely to your judgment."

"Then let us come to the edict about priests."

"That I can never sanction, as I have already told you."

"You have made your sanction of this second decree necessary by sanctioning the former decree, relating to the same subject."

"I committed a fault, for which I reproach myself. That is no reason why I should be guilty of a second, greater than the first."

"Sire!" said the Queen.

Louis turned towards his wife, and asked: "You also, Madame?"

"Sire," said the Queen, "I must acknowledge that on this point, after the explication which he has given us, I am of the Premier's opinion."

"Well, then —" said the King.

"Well, Sire —?" repeated Dumouriez.

"I consent! but with the condition that you relieve me of my three obnoxious ministers as soon as possible!"

"Believe me, Sire, that I will seize the first occasion to do so; and I feel confident that occasion is not far off."

Saluting their Majesties, the Premier then retired. They gazed after their new War Minister till the door closed behind him.

"You made me a sign to agree to his proposal," said the King. "Now what have you to say about it?"

"Accept first the military edict. Let the camp be established at Soissons. Let Dumouriez disperse the men as he proposes; and afterward — well, afterward you can see what had better be done about the priestly edict."

"But he would remind me of my pledge, Madame!"

"Good! He would be compromised, and you would have a hold upon him."

"On the contrary, he would have a hold upon me, Madame! He has my word!"

"Bah! There's a remedy for that, when one has been trained by such a Jesuit as Monsieur de la Vauguyon!" and taking the King's arm, she drew him with her into the next room.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE OCCASION.

As we have already hinted, the real battle was now between the Rue Guénégaud and the Tuileries, between the Queen and Madame Roland.

It is indeed strange that both these women exercised over their husbands an influence which led all four to death; only they travelled towards this end by opposite roads.

The events which we have narrated took place on June 10. The next day, in the evening, Servan came joyously to Madame Roland's.

"Congratulate me, dear friend," he said. "I have the honor of being turned out of the Council."

"How so?" asked Madame Roland.

"This is actually the fact. This morning I went to the King, for an interview about certain affairs in my department. When those had been attended to, I warmly attacked the question of the encampment for twenty thousand volunteers; but —"

"But —?"

"At the first word I spoke, his Majesty turned his back on me, being in a very bad humor; and this evening, in his Majesty's name, Dumouriez sent to me for the War Portfolio."

"Dumouriez?"

"Yes!"

"He is playing a villanous part, but that does n't surprise me. Ask Roland what I said to him about that

man, the evening he came to us for the first time. Besides, we are informed that he is in daily conference with the Queen."

"He's a traitor!"

"No! but he's ambitious. Go and find Roland and Clavières."

"Where is Roland?"

"He is attending to his duties at the Bureau of the Interior."

"And you, — what are you about meanwhile?"

"Writing a letter which I will communicate to you on your return. — So be off!"

"You are certainly the famous Goddess of Reason, whom the *philosophes* have invoked from time immemorial."

"And whom conscientious people have found. — Don't come back without Clavières."

"That request will probably cause some delay."

"I need an hour."

"Take it! and may the Genius of France inspire you!"

Servan went away. Hardly was the door shut before Madame Roland was at her desk, writing the following letter to the King, though it was not to appear in her own name.

SIRE: The present state of affairs in France cannot long continue. It is a crucial condition, whose tide is attaining its highest mark. It cannot but end in a storm, which must concern your Majesty as well as the whole country.

Honored with your confidence, and placed in a position where I owe you the truth, I venture to speak. Indeed, this is an obligation imposed upon me by yourself.

The French people have had a Constitution bestowed upon them. Some it makes discontented, and some rebellious; but the majority of the people wish to maintain it. They have sworn to maintain it, even at the cost of their own

blood, and they have even joyfully greeted a civil war, which offered them a strong means of ensuring the maintenance of the Constitution.

Meanwhile the minority, buoyed up by certain encouragements, have used every effort to get the advantage. Hence an internal struggle against the laws. Hence the anarchy which good citizens lament, and which evil-wishers have used as an occasion for deriding the new order of things. Out of this arise the divisions everywhere showing themselves; for indifference is nowhere to be found. There is a popular demand for either the triumph or the amendment of the Constitution. People are working for either its maintenance or its alteration.

I herein abstain from any examination of what the Constitution is in itself, in order to consider only what present circumstances require. So far as possible I place myself outside the Constitution, in order to learn what is expected of it, and what measures ought to be favored.

Your Majesty rejoices in certain important prerogatives, which you believe to rightfully belong to royalty. Brought up with the idea of maintaining those prerogatives, you cannot gladly see them taken away. The desire for their restoration is as natural as regret at their disappearance.

These sentiments, which inhere in the nature of the human heart, must have entered into the calculations of the enemies of the Revolution. They have counted on secret favor, until such a time as circumstances may permit open protection. These tendencies cannot escape the notice of the Nation, and they inspire distrust.

Your Majesty has been constantly placed between two alternatives. On the one side you have been tempted to seek a return to ancient customs and personal preferences. On the other you have been urged to make those personal sacrifices which are dictated by philosophy and exacted by necessity.

This has led you to doubt whether you should embolden the malecontents who disturb the Nation, or appease the Nation by uniting yourself with it. Everything has an end, however, and the end of uncertainty has at last arrived.

Will his Majesty openly ally himself with those who pretend to wish to reform the Constitution, or generously and unreservedly devote himself to making it triumphant? That is the question whose solution is rendered inevitable by the absolute condition of things.

As to that very metaphysical inquiry, whether the French people are ripe for liberty, its discussion is not now in order; for it does not concern us so much to decide what our people may be a century hence, as to know of what the present generation is capable.

The Declaration of Human Rights, so early adopted by the Assembly, has become a political Gospel, and the French Constitution has already become a religion, for which the people are ready to die. This elation has already reached a point where it sometimes overrides the laws; and where the laws were not strong enough to repress malecontents, citizens have taken retribution into their own hands. In this way the estates and property of refugees, or of persons known to belong to their party, have been exposed to ravages inspired by revenge. This is why the authorities, in so many districts, have been obliged to deal severely with those priests who are proscribed by a public opinion which makes them its victims.

In this collision of interests, all sentiments have taken on a tinge of passion. *Our Country* is not simply a phrase for the imagination to dilate upon and embellish. It is a living being, for which sacrifices must be made, and which is the more endeared to us by the solicitude it causes. The Nation has been developed by great efforts, and reared in the midst of anxieties; and she is loved as much for what she has cost as for the hopes she holds forth. All the attacks made upon her but add so much fuel to the popular enthusiasm in her behalf.

To what a height will not this enthusiasm mount, whenever the united forces of our outside enemies combine with intestine intrigues to smite our Nation with fatal blows?

There are great disturbances in all parts of the kingdom. This fermentation will lead to a terrible explosion, unless

calmed by a rational confidence in your Majesty's intentions. This confidence cannot be built on protestations. It must rest upon a basis of facts.

It is evident that the Constitution will be an established fact for the French Nation, and that our government will have all essential guarantees, as soon as your Majesty — absolutely desiring the success of that Constitution — is ready to sustain the Legislature to the full extent of your power in the Executive Department, so that the uneasiness of the people may be removed, and no aid and comfort be afforded to malecontents.

For example, two important edicts have been passed by the Assembly. Both intimately concern the public peace and the safety of the state. Delay in signing these edicts rouses distrust. If prolonged, it will cause great dissatisfaction.

In view of this impending effervescence of the public mind — I must say this — the turbulent elements of society may sweep all before them.

It is no longer possible to draw back. There are no further means of temporizing. The Revolution has taken fast hold upon our minds. It will become an accomplished fact, even at the price of blood; and therewith it will be cemented, unless wisdom anticipates such a misfortune, which it is yet possible to evade.

I am aware that some people imagine that anything can be accomplished or upheld by extreme measures; but if force should be employed to constrain our Assembly, as soon as terror spread over Paris, and division and dismay seized upon the suburbs, all France would rise in indignation. Torn with the horrors of civil war the Nation would develop that gloomy energy, — mother alike of virtues and of crimes, — always fatal to those who provoked it.

The welfare of the state and the happiness of your Majesty are closely connected. No force can separate them. Cruel woes and dire misfortunes will surround your throne, if it is not planted by yourself on the groundwork of the Constitution, and so bound firmly to that peace which the maintenance of that Constitution must finally procure for us.

Thus it is that the public disposition, the general course of events, political policy, and your Majesty's interest, all render indispensable your obligation to unite with the legislative body in responding to the wishes of the Nation. These reasons make a necessity of what principle sets forth as a duty. The natural sensibility of an affectionate people is ready to adopt any method of showing its gratitude.

You have been cruelly deceived, Sire, by those who have inspired you to distrust the people, or estrange yourself from subjects so easily touched with affection. It is through your perpetual alarm from this direction, that you have been pushed into a line of conduct which causes public disturbance. Only let it be seen that you are resolved to aid the success of the Constitution with which the popular happiness is so bound up, and soon you will again become the object of your people's fervent prayers.

The conduct of the priests in many sections affords a pretext which encourages the fanaticism of agitators, and this has made it necessary to pass a law against such disturbers. Oh that your Majesty would approve that edict! The public tranquillity demands it. The safety of the priesthood requires it. If that law is not put into operation, the departmental authorities will be compelled to substitute violent measures in place of legal measures, as has already been done in all directions, and the irritated people will rush into immediate excesses.

The attempts of our enemies; the agitation which has manifested itself in the capital; the great anxiety inspired by the behavior of your disbanded guards, and especially the ardent satisfaction shown by your Majesty, in a proclamation decidedly impolitic under the circumstances; the situation of Paris, and its nearness to the frontiers, — all these facts have created a necessity for a military encampment in our neighborhood.

This measure, whose urgency and expediency commend it to all well-disposed minds, still awaits your Majesty's approval. Why is tardiness allowed to give this approval an air of reluctance, when celerity would win all hearts?

Already the efforts of the staff-officers of the Parisian National Guards against this measure have roused the suspicion

that they are instigated thereto by a higher authority. Already the declarations of several fanatical demagogues have awakened a suspicion of their alliance with those who are interested in the overturn of the Constitution. Already these facts have compromised your Majesty's intentions. If there is further delay, the disappointed people will see in their sovereign the friend and accomplice of conspirators.

Great Heaven ! hast thou struck earthly powers with blindness ? Shall we never have other counsel than that which leads to ruin ?

I know that the severe language of truth is rarely welcome near the throne. I know also that revolutions are made necessary by the fact that truth is so seldom heard by royalty. I also know that I sustain to your Majesty, not solely the relation of a simple citizen, amenable to the laws, but also the relation of a cabinet-minister, honored with your confidence, and clothed with functions which confirm that trust ; and I am unacquainted with any reason which should prevent me from fulfilling a duty I owe to my conscience.

It is in the same spirit that I reiterate my representations to your Majesty, as to the obligation and utility of putting into execution the law which ordains the appointment of a recording secretary for your Council. The simple existence of this law speaks so powerfully, that the execution thereof should follow without delay. It is important that all means should be employed to give such deliberations the proper gravity, prudence, and maturity ; and if cabinet-ministers are to be held responsible, their opinions should be duly recorded. If such records were kept, I should not now be writing this letter to your Majesty.

Life is naught to one who esteems duty as of the highest importance ; but next the happiness of having fulfilled the obligations of conscience, the single remaining pleasure is to prove that this task has been faithfully performed ; and even that charge is not merely a public officer's pleasure, but his duty.

June 10, 1792.

The year iv. of Liberty.

This letter was hardly finished, and Madame Roland had barely traced the last word, when Servan, Clavières, and Roland came in.

In two words Madame Roland unfolded her plan to the three friends.

The letter, which was now read among the three, was to be next day read to the other three ministers, Dumouriez, Lacoste, and Duranthon.

Either they would approve it, and add their signatures, or they would reject it. In the latter event, Servan, Clavières, and Roland would at once offer their resignations, moved to do so by the refusal of their colleagues to sign a letter which seemed truly to express the opinions and wishes of the French people.

Then they would deposit the letter with the National Assembly, that there might be no doubt throughout France of the cause of the withdrawal of these Patriots from the Council.

The letter was read by the three friends, who did not find a word they wished to change. Madame Roland was the common soul, from which each drank the elixir of patriotism.

It was not the same on the morrow, after the letter was read by Roland to Dumouriez, Duranthon, and Lacoste.

All three approved the ideas, but differed as to the manner of expressing those ideas. At last they rejected the letter, declaring it would be worth more if reported personally to the King. Of course this was only an evasion of the question.

That evening Roland sent the letter to the King, signed by himself alone. Almost immediately Lacoste sent a dismissal to Roland and Clavières.

As Dumouriez had said to the King, they did not have

long to wait for an occasion of dismissal. It is also true that the King did not try to retard the occasion.

The next day, as had been planned, Roland's letter was read from the rostrum of the Assembly, at the same time as the announcement of the removal of himself and his two colleagues, Clavières and Servan.

By an immense majority the Assembly voted a record of its opinion, that the three deposed ministers deserved well of their country.

Thus war was declared both inside and outside France. Before dealing the opening blows, the Assembly only waited to learn what were the King's intentions in reference to the two decrees.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE PUPIL OF MONSIEUR DE LA VAUGUYON.

At the very moment when the Assembly was voting, by acclamation, thanks to the three retiring ministers, and ordering that Roland's letter should be printed and sent to all the departments of the kingdom, Dumouriez appeared at the legislative door.

He was known to be brave, but it was not supposed that he was audacious.

He had been apprised of what was going on, and had come boldly to take the bull by the horns.

The pretext for his appearance at the Assembly at that moment was a remarkable report on the condition of the Nation's military forces. As Minister of War only since the evening previous, he had, with the help of others, prepared this report during a single night. It was an attack upon Servan, which in reality fell upon Grave, and above all upon their predecessor, Narbonne. Servan had only been minister during ten or twelve days.

Dumouriez came well fortified. He had just left the King, whom he had urged to remain faithful to his double pledge in regard to his approval of the two decrees; and the King had responded, not only by renewing his promise, but by affirming that the clergy, whom he had consulted in order to satisfy his conscience, were of the same opinion as Dumouriez. So the War Minister went straight to the rostrum, which he ascended amid confused outcries and fierce shouts.

As soon as he reached the platform he coolly asked for a hearing.

This was granted, in the midst of an ungovernable tumult. At last, curiosity to hear what Dumouriez had to say brought about a calm.

"Gentlemen, General Gouvion has recently been killed. God has rewarded him for his courage. He died fighting the enemies of France. He is indeed happy! He is not a witness of our frightful discords! I envy his lot!"

Such words, uttered with dignity and deep melancholy, made their impression on the Assembly. Moreover this death caused a diversion in the sentiments of the members. They began to consider what ought to be done by the Assembly, in order to express its regret to the General's family, and it was decided that the President should write a letter of condolence.

Then Dumouriez again asked for the floor, which was again accorded.

He drew his report from his pocket; but hardly had he read the title, "Report on the Ministry of War," before the Girondists and Jacobins began to yell, in order to prevent him from reading it.

In the midst of this noise he read the introduction, but in such elevated tones, and with such clear enunciation, that they could not help hearing that this exordium dwelt upon the respect due a cabinet-minister, and was also an attack upon party divisions.

Such cheek was likely to excite his hearers, even if they had been in a less irritable mood.

"Do you hear him?" cried Guadet. "He already feels so sure of his strength, that he dares take us to task!"

"Why not?" replied Dumouriez, tranquilly, turning towards his interrupter.

It was long ago said, and truly, that in France the

most prudent thing is courage. Dumouriez's courage vanquished his adversaries. They held their peace. That is, as they wished to hear, they listened.

The report was learned, luminous, able. Strong as was the prejudice against the speaker, he was twice applauded.

Lacuée, who was a member of the Committee on Military Affairs, took the stand to reply, while Dumouriez rolled up the report and was coolly replacing it in his pocket.

The Girondists saw this movement, and one of them called out: "See him, the traitor! He's putting his report into his pocket. He means to run away with it. Stop him! That document will serve to confound him later on!"

At this outcry Dumouriez, who had not taken a single step towards the entrance, again drew the report from his pocket, and offered it to an usher.

A secretary stretched out his hand to receive it; and having received it, he searched for the signature. "Gentlemen, the report is not signed."

"Sign it! Sign it!" came from all sides.

"That was my intention," said Dumouriez. "So religiously is it drawn up, that I need not hesitate about putting my name to it. Give me the ink and a quill!"

Some one offered him a quill wet with ink. He then set one foot on the platform steps, and signed the report upon his knee.

The usher offered to take it again; but Dumouriez pushed him aside, and went and deposited the report on the desk. Then he crossed the hall with short steps, stopping here and there, and went out through the door behind the benches on the left.

His entry had been greeted with yells and shouts; but

his exit, on the other hand, was accompanied by the profoundest silence.

The spectators in the galleries hurried out through the corridors, to have another look at the man who had dared to confront the whole Assembly.

At the Feuillant gate he was surrounded by three or four hundred persons, who pressed about him through curiosity or dislike, as if they had foreseen that three months later he would be the savior of France at Valmy.

Several Royalist Deputies left the hall, one after the other, and ran after Dumouriez. In their minds there was no longer any doubt that the General belonged to their party. This was precisely what Dumouriez had anticipated; and this was why he had made the King promise to sanction the two edicts.

"Well, General," said one of them, "they are raising the Devil in there!"

"They may well do that," answered Dumouriez, "for I don't know but what the Devil is at the bottom of it."

"You don't know?" said another. "Why, the Assembly has raised the question whether it is not best to send you to Orleans, and let you be tried there."

"Good!" said Dumouriez. "I need a vacation. There I can take the baths, drink fresh milk, and get rested."

"General," cried a third person, "they are voting not to print your report."

"So much the better. It is a blunder which will win unprejudiced observers to my side."

In the midst of such an escort and of such speeches Dumouriez arrived at the palace. The King welcomed him most cordially, for now the War Minister was decidedly compromised.

The new Council was already in session. In dismissing Roland, Servan, and Clavières, the Premier had believed himself well able to replace them.

For Minister of the Interior he proposed Mourgues, of Montpellier, a Protestant and a member of several scientific academies, who had formerly belonged to the Feuillant Club. This name the King had accepted.

For the Foreign Portfolio he had proposed either Maulde, Sémonville, or Naillac. The King preferred Naillac.

For Secretary of Finance he had proposed Vergennes, a nephew of the old Secretary. Vergennes was acceptable to the King, who immediately sent after him ; but this gentleman, though expressing a deep attachment to the King, declined the honor.

It was therefore decided that during the interim the Finance Portfolio should be held by the Secretary of the Interior ; and that while waiting for the return of Naillac, who was absent from Paris, Dumouriez should continue in charge of Foreign Affairs.

These four ministers, however, did not conceal from themselves the gravity of the situation ; and they agreed that if the King, after the dismissal of Servan, Clavières, and Roland, should not keep the promise which was the price of this dismissal, they also would resign.

The new Council, as we have said, was already in session. The King knew what had taken place at the Assembly. He congratulated Dumouriez on the attitude he had maintained, and immediately signed the decree for the establishment of a camp of twenty thousand volunteers ; but he postponed till the next day his official approval of the edict concerning the recalcitrant priests. He said he had still some scruples of conscience, which might be relieved by his confessor.

The ministers looked at one another. A faint suspicion glided through their minds. All things considered, however, the King's timorous conscience might need this delay, in order to become thoroughly strengthened.

The next day the Council returned to the question of the evening before. Sure enough, the night had done its work. The King's will was strengthened, if not his conscience. He declared he should append his veto to that edict.

One after the other, Dumouriez leading, — because to him the royal pledge had been personally given, — the four ministers spoke to the King firmly, but respectfully.

The King listened with closed eyes, in the attitude of a man who has made up his mind. When they had all spoken he said : " Gentlemen, I have written a letter to the President of the Assembly, to inform him of my resolution. One of you will countersign it, and all four of you will take the letter to the Assembly."

This was an order, issued in the style of the old régime, but ill-sounding to the ears of ministers made responsible under the Constitution.

" Sire," said Dumouriez, after an ocular consultation with his colleagues, " have you no other commands to issue ? "

" No ! " replied the King ; and then he at once left the room.

The ministers remained in their places and voted to request an audience for next day. It was agreed that they should enter into no explanations, but simply resign in a body.

Dumouriez returned home. The King had almost beaten him in the game of politics, the finesse of diplomacy, — him, the general whose courage had been doubly buttressed by intrigue !

He found three notes from different persons, announcing mischievous gatherings in the Faubourg Saint Antoine, and cabals at Santerre's brewery. He at once wrote to the King to warn him of these occurrences.

An hour later he received a billet, not signed by the King, but in his handwriting :

Do not imagine, Monsieur, that I am to be intimidated by threats. My stand is taken.

In his turn Dumouriez seized his pen and wrote :

SIRE : You misjudge me, if you suppose me capable of employing such a method of maintaining my position. My colleagues and myself have the honor of writing to your Majesty, to ask for the favor of an audience to-morrow, at ten in the forenoon. Meanwhile I beg your Majesty to have the goodness to accept my resignation, and to select a successor who will take my place within twenty-four hours, and take charge of the departments both of War and Foreign Affairs.

This letter he sent by a clerk, in order to ensure a response. The clerk departed exactly at midnight, and in half an hour returned with the following note :

I will meet my ministers to-morrow at ten, and we will then talk over what you have written.

The Counter-Revolution was evidently at work in the palace. The Crown must indeed depend upon some reliable support.

There were the Constitutional Guards. To be sure they had been disbanded, but they were ready to come together at the first call.

Then there were seven or eight thousand Chevaliers of the Order of Saint Louis, for whom their red ribbon was a rallying sign.

Three Swiss battalions, of sixteen hundred men each, constituted an impregnable body of men, firm as the ancient Helvetian rocks.

Better than all was a letter from Lafayette, in which this phrase occurred :

Persist, Sire ! Strong in the authority delegated to you by the National Assembly, you will find all good Frenchmen arrayed in support of your throne !

Thus we see that something might be done. This was what was proposed : in one breath to reunite the Constitutional Guards, together with the Knights of Saint Louis and the Swiss mercenaries ; on the same day, and at the same hour, to seize upon the cannon in the different sections, close the Assembly and the Jacobin Club, rally all the Royalist members of the National Guard, — forming a contingency of some fifteen thousand men, — and then wait for Lafayette, who in three days of forced marching could come from Ardennes.

Unfortunately the Queen would not listen to the suggestion of Lafayette's assistance. He was a moderate Revolutionist. In the Queen's opinion a moderate Revolution might be able to establish itself and persistently hold its own ; whereas a Jacobin Revolution would run into such extremes that it could not last.

Oh, if Charny had only been there ! but nobody knew where Charny was ; and even if they had known, it would have been too great a humiliation for the Queen — not to mention the woman — to run after him.

The night was passed in tumultuous deliberation at the palace. The Court had the means of defence, and even of attack ; but there was lacking a strong hand to arrange and direct.

At ten in the forenoon the ministers came. This was

on June 16. The King received them in his private parlor.

Duranthon spoke first. In the name of all four, and with tender and deep respect, he offered the resignations of himself and colleagues.

"Yes, I quite understand you," said the King, — "the responsibility!"

"Sire," said Lacoste, "the *royal* responsibility! As to ourselves, you may surely believe that we are ready to die for your Majesty; but by dying for a set of priests, we should only hasten the fall of royalty."

Louis turned to Dumouriez. "Do you still entertain the same sentiments which you expressed in your letter?"

"Yes, Sire," responded Dumouriez, "if your Majesty is not converted by the fidelity of our attachment."

"Very well!" said the King, with a gloomy air. "If your decision is made, I accept your resignations, and will attend to your affairs."

All four bowed. Mourgues had his resignation already written out, and handed it to the King. The others gave theirs orally.

There were courtiers waiting in the antechamber. They saw the ministers come out, and saw, by the official faces, that all was over. Some courtiers rejoiced. Others were scared. The atmosphere was heavy, as often happens in the hot days of summer, and everybody felt the coming of the storm.

At the gates of the Tuileries, Dumouriez met a commander of the National Guard, Romainvilliers. He was coming with all haste.

"Monsieur Secretary," he said, "I come for orders."

"I am no longer minister, Monsieur," answered Dumouriez.

"But there are disturbing assemblages in some of the districts."

"Go to the King for orders!"

"This is a pressing affair!"

"Hurry, then! The King has already accepted our resignations."

Romainvilliers ran up the staircase.

On June 17, in the morning, Dumouriez saw Chambonnas and Lajard enter his apartments. They came on behalf of the King, — Chambonnas to receive the Portfolio of Foreign Affairs, and Lajard, the Portfolio of War.

The King expected Dumouriez on the next morning, June 18, to arrange with him the last details of his office, and go over the account of secret expenditures.

Seeing him re-enter the palace, it was believed that he had been recalled to his station, and many came up to congratulate him.

"Gentlemen," said Dumouriez, "be careful! You are making friends, not with a man who is coming in, but with a man who is going out. I only come to surrender my accounts."

Immediately there was a general stampede in his neighborhood.

At that moment an usher announced that the King would see Monsieur Dumouriez in his chamber.

The King had regained his serenity. Was this from mental force, or did it arise from a delusive sense of security?

Dumouriez presented his accounts. This task being finished, Dumouriez arose.

The King turned his armchair around and said: "Then you propose to rejoin Luckner's army?"

"Yes, Sire. I am glad to quit this dreadful city, and

do so with only one regret, — that of leaving you in danger.”

“Indeed,” said Louis, with comparative indifference, “I know that I am always more or less in peril.”

“Sire, you must know that what I now say to you has no personal interest to me. Once out of your Council, I am forever separated from you. It is out of fidelity, out of the purest attachment to yourself, out of my love of country, — it is for the sake of your crown, your wife, your children, it is in the name of all that is dear and sacred to the human heart, — that I beg your Majesty not to persist in your veto. This tenacity will do no good, and you will be lost, Sire!”

“Speak no further,” said the King, impatiently, “my position is taken!”

“Sire, Sire, you said the same thing here, in this very room, in the Queen’s presence, when you promised to approve those two edicts.”

“I was wrong so to promise, Monsieur, and I have repented.”

“Sire, I repeat to you, — and as this is the last time I shall have the honor of seeing you, pray pardon my frankness, — that you were not in the wrong when you promised to uphold these decrees; but you are wrong to-day, when you refuse to keep your promise. Your conscience is abused. You are urged on to a civil war. You have no strength. You will be overcome. History will pity you; but it will reproach you as the cause of our country’s woes.”

“Our country’s woes?” said Louis. “Do you pretend to say I shall be blamed on that account?”

“Yes, Sire!”

“God is my witness, that I wish only the best happiness of France.”

"I have no doubt of it, Sire ! but you must render an account to God, not only for the purity, but also for the sagacity of your intentions. You think you are serving religion. You are destroying it. Your priests will be massacred. Your crown will be broken and rolled in your own blood, — in the blood also of the Queen and your children. Oh, my King, my King !"

Almost suffocating, Dumouriez pressed his lips on the hand which the King extended to him.

Then the King said, with that perfect serenity and majesty of which one might have supposed him incapable : "You are right, Monsieur. I expect a violent death, and I pardon my murderers in advance. As to yourself, you have served me faithfully. I esteem you, and I know that your intuitions are right. — Adieu, Monsieur !"

Rising quickly, the King retired into the embrasure of a window.

Dumouriez slowly gathered his papers together, in order to give himself time to compose his countenance. With lingering steps he went towards the door, ready to turn back at the first word from Louis the Sixteenth ; but the first words were also the last.

"Adieu, Monsieur ! May you be happy !" said the King.

After these words there was no excuse for tarrying an instant longer. Dumouriez went out.

Royalty had broken with its last prop. The King had dropped his mask. He stood with uncovered face before the people.

Let us see what the people were doing on their side.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A CABAL AT CHARENTON.

ALL day long a man parades up and down the Saint Antoine Quarter. He is dressed in a general's uniform, rides a huge Flemish horse, shakes hands right and left, kissing the pretty girls, and giving the young fellows drink-money.

This man is one of the six who have succeeded Lafayette, in joint command of the National Guards, — a silver piece divided into six copper sous. In other words, this is General Santerre, chief of a battalion.

Near him, like an aide-de-camp near his general, — and mounted also on a strong horse, — trots a man whose costume shows him to be a Patriot from the rural districts. A cut has left its scar on his forehead. His eye is gloomy and his physiognomy threatening. He presents a marked contrast to his commander, who has a frank smile and an open countenance.

“Be on the alert, my good friends! Watch over the Nation! Traitors are conspiring against her, but we are at the front.” So speaks Santerre.

“What must we do, Monsieur Santerre?” ask the citizens of the ward. “You know we are with you! Where are the traitors? Lead us against them!”

“Wait!” replies Santerre. “When the right moment comes —”

“And is it coming?”

Santerre really does not know ; but he responds at a venture : " Yes, yes ! Be easy ! You 'll be notified ! "

The man following Santerre bends over his horse's neck, and whispers in the ear of certain men, whom he recognizes by certain signs : " The Twentieth of June ! "

These men go away with that date on their lips. At a distance of every ten, twenty, or thirty paces a group forms about him, and this message circulates : " The Twentieth of June ! "

What is to happen on that day ? Nobody yet knows ; but this they do know, that on June 20 *something* is to be done.

Among the men to whom this date is communicated may be recognized some who are no strangers to the events already recorded in our narrative.

There is Saint-Huruge, whom we saw on the morning of October 5, 1789, at the head of the first detachment which left the Palais-Royal Garden for Versailles. Saint-Huruge is a husband who had been deceived by his wife at some time prior to 1789. He was imprisoned in the Bastille, from which he was delivered on July 14, when that fortress was demolished, and thereafter he devoted himself to revenge on nobility and royalty, in return for his conjugal wrongs and his illegal incarceration.

You recognize Verrières, do you not ? Twice before have we met this Apocalyptic hunchback, with legs so long and body so short that he looks as if he were cloven in twain from toe to chin. Once we met him in the wine-shop at Sevres Bridge, in company with Marat and Aiguillon, the Duke being disguised as a woman. Again we saw him at the Champ de Mars, an instant before the firing began.

There is Fournier the American (so-called) who shot at Lafayette through the wheels of a carriage, and whose

musket missed fire. He then promised himself that next time he would strike higher than the Commander of the National Guard, and in order that his gun should not thwart him again, he determined that he would strike with the sword.

There is Monsieur de Beausire, who has not amended his ways during the time he has been left in the background by our story, — after he reclaimed Olivia from the arms of the dying Mirabeau, — as the Chevalier des Grieux reclaimed Manon Lescaut from the hands which lifted her temporarily from the mud, and then let her fall again into the mire.

There is Mouchet, a short, twisted, lame, bandy-legged man, enveloped in an enormous tricolored scarf, which covers half his body, as if he were a municipal officer, a justice of the peace, or something of that sort.

Behold Gonchon, the Mirabeau of the People, who was once judged by Pitou to be homelier than the Mirabeau of the Nobility, — Gonchon, who disappears after an outbreak, as if he were part of a supernatural spectacle; but who vanishes only to reappear afterwards, more impassioned than ever, more terrible, more venomous, like a demon, without whom the manager of the spectacle could not get along.

Up and down through the crowd — reunited around the ruins of the Bastille, as on a modern Mount Aventine — passes and repasses a spare and pale young man, with hair brushed down smooth, and eyes full of fire. He is acquainted with nobody, and nobody is acquainted with him. He is as solitary as the eagle, which some day he is to make the national emblem.

This is Bonaparte, a lieutenant of artillery, who by chance is spending his furlough in Paris. It will be remembered that Cagliostro made a singular prediction

to Gilbert concerning this man, when he once came to the Jacobin Club.

By whom is this crowd moved, influenced, excited? By a man with a powerful frame, a roaring voice, and hair like a lion's mane, whom Santerre, on his return home, finds waiting for him in his back shop, — Danton.

This is the hour when this terrible Revolutionist — hardly known heretofore, except by the noise which he made in the pit at the Theatre Français, over the representation of Chénier's "Charles the Ninth," and by his awful platform eloquence at the Cordelier Club — makes his first real appearance on the political stage, where he extends his giant arms.

Whence comes this man's power, which threatens to be so fatal to royalty? From the Queen herself.

She would not have Lafayette for Mayor of Paris, — this vengeful Austrian woman. She preferred Pétion, the man who was so discourteous to her on the journey from Varennes. Hardly was he installed as Mayor when he began the contest with the King, by placing the Tuileries under surveillance.

When he took possession of the Hôtel de Ville, Pétion had two friends whom he stationed on his right hand and left, — Manuel on his right, Danton on his left. He appointed Manuel to the office of Procureur of the Commune, with Danton as his substitute.

Standing on the rostrum and pointing to the Tuileries, Vergniaud had said: "Often enough, in the olden days, have Terror and Dismay stalked forth from yonder palace, in the name of Despotism. Now let Terror and Dismay re-enter that palace, in the name of Law."

Well, the hour has come when the Girondist orator's grand yet fearful metaphor is to be translated into action. Terror is to be sought for and found in the Saint

Antoine District, and hurried, with her discordant cries and distorted arms, into the palace reared by Catherine de Médicis.

What better can be done than to evoke that terrible Magician of the Revolution, whom men call Danton?

Danton has large shoulders and a heavy hand. Beneath his athletic breast beats a stout heart. Danton is the signal gong of the Revolution. To the blow struck upon his breast he responds with a powerful vibration, which spreads throughout the crowd, which is drowned in the noise.

On one side Danton touches the people, through Hébert. On the other he reaches the throne, through Orléans. He stands midway between the petty tradesman, at the street corner, and the prince royal, on the steps of the throne.

By a touch upon each connecting key before him, he can reach a responsive social fibre. Cast your eyes over this gamut, which runs over two octaves, in harmony with this powerful voice: Hébert, Legendre, Gonchon, Rossignol, Momoro, Brune, Huguenin, Rotondo, Santerre, Fabre d'Églantine, Camille Desmoulins, Dugazon, Lazowski, Sillery, Genlis, the Duc d'Orléans.

Take note that we cognize only the visible outlines of power; but who shall say to what depths this force descends, and out of what depths it arises, — depths beyond the reach of our vision?

Well, it is this unseen power which sways the Saint Antoine Quarter.

On June 16 one of Danton's men, Lazowski the Pole, — a member of the Communal Council, — shoots the arrow.

He announces in the Council that on June 20 two districts, Saint Antoine and Saint Marceau, will present

petitions to the King and to the Assembly, on the subject of the royal veto of the edict relative to the non-juring priests ; and that at the same time they will plant a tree in the Feuillant Terrace, to be christened the Tree of Liberty, in commemoration of the session and oath in the Tennis Court, on June 20, 1789. To this scheme the Council refuses its sanction.

"We must get along without its sanction," whispered Danton in Lazouski's ear.

Lazouski repeats aloud : "We can get along without it !"

So this date of June 20 has an exoteric and an esoteric meaning. One is a pretext — the presentation of a petition and the planting of a Liberty Tree.

The other significance of the day is as yet known only to a few of the initiated. There is to be an attempt to rescue France from Lafayette and the Feuillants, and warn the incorrigible King, still a sovereign of the old school, that there are political tempests wherein a monarch may be engulfed, with his throne, his crown, his family, — as a ship is swallowed up in the ocean, with many lives and chattels, "with all her crew complete."

As we have said, Danton has been waiting for Santerre in the latter's back shop. He sent word last night, by Legendre, that to-day the awakening of the district must begin. In the morning Billot presented himself at the brewer's. After making a sign of recognition, he announced that for all day the committee had assigned him the duty of remaining near Santerre. This is how it happens that Billot, while apparently acting as Santerre's aide, really knows more about the whole matter than Santerre himself.

Danton makes an appointment with Santerre for the evening of the next day, in a small house at Charenton,

situated on the right bank of the Marne, at the end of the bridge.

There may be met all those men, of mysterious and secret ways, who always direct the current in times of commotion. Each one of them is punctual at the rendezvous.

The passions of these men are diverse. Whence do they take their rise? That is indeed a gloomy page of history. Some are moved by love of liberty. Many, like Billot, are moved by the desire of vengeance for insults received. The greatest number are moved by hatred, misery, and bad instincts.

On the main floor is a closed room, into which only the chiefs have the right of entrance. From this room they emerge with careful, exact, and peremptory injunctions. One might call this room a Shekinah, where some god utters his oracles.

An immense map of Paris is spread on the table. Danton's finger traces the springs and brooks, — the courses and junction-points of these rivulets, these rivers, these streams of men, which two days later will inundate Paris.

Place de la Bastille, into which empty all the streets from the Saint Antoine, Saint Marceau, and Arsenal quarters, is named as the place of meeting. The Assembly Hall is to be the ostensible aim of the march, the Tuileries its real object.

The boulevard is to be the wide and safe street through which the thundering human wave is to roll.

Posts having been assigned to each conspirator, and each having promised to be on hand, the chiefs separate.

The general order is, to finish up at the palace. How are they to finish up at the palace? That is left in uncertainty.

During the whole day, on June 19, groups of people are standing on the embankments of the ruined Bastille, in the neighborhood of the Arsenal, and in the Saint Antoine District.

Suddenly a bold and fearsome amazon, clad all in red, appears in the midst of the Saint Antoine crowd. In her belt she carries her pistols. At her side she wears a sword, which, after eighteen other wounds, is destined to search out the heart-life of Suleau.

This is Théroigne de Méricourt, the beautiful citizeness of Liége. We saw her on the road to Versailles, on that memorable day in October. Where has she been in the interval?

Her native city, Liége, was in revolt. Théroigne wished to go to its help. She was arrested by the agents of King Leopold, and detained eighteen months in Austrian prisons.

Did she escape? Was she allowed to get away? Did she file her bars? Did she corrupt her jailer? Everything about this woman is as mysterious as the beginning of her life, as terrible as its end.

Whatever may be the other facts, she has returned! Here she is! From being a courtesan, rolling in wealth, she has become the people's prostitute. The nobility have given her the gold, wherewith she has procured the well-tempered blades and the embossed pistols with which she is to smite her enemies.

The people recognize her and welcome her with loud cries. How seasonably she arrives, the beautiful Théroigne, clad in red for the bloody festival of the morrow!

On the evening of the same day the Queen sees her gallop along the Feuillant Terrace. She is on her way from Place de la Bastille to the Champs Élysées, from the popular assemblage to the Patriotic banquet.

From the attics of the Tuileries, whither the Queen ascends when she hears the outcries, she can see the well-spread tables. Wine circulates. Patriotic songs resound. As each toast is drunk, — to the Assembly, to the Girondists, to Liberty, — the feasters shake their fists at the Tuileries.

Dugazon, the actor, sings couplets deriding the King, the Queen, and the palace; and the King and Queen can hear the applause which follows each refrain.

Who are these feasters? Marseilles Federals, led by Barbaroux. They only arrived last night.

On June 18 the Tenth of August makes its entry into Paris.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE TWENTIETH OF JUNE.

IN the month of June daylight comes early. By five in the morning the battalions had assembled. This time the uprising was systematic, and appeared almost like an invasion. The crowd knew its leaders and was submissive to discipline. Each man had his appointed place, under his own flag and in his proper rank.

Santerre was on horseback, with the staff of men belonging to his district. Billot did not leave Santerre for an instant. One might have supposed him charged, by some occult power, with the guardianship of his chief.

The multitude was separated into three divisions. The first was commanded by Santerre, the second by Saint-Huruge, the third by Théroigne de Méricourt.

Towards eleven o'clock, under an order brought by some man unknown, the immense mass of people put itself in motion. At its departure from the Bastille, the procession was composed of nearly twenty thousand men.

This troop presented a savage, terrible, and unique aspect. Santerre's division was the best-ordered. There were in it a goodly number of uniforms; and for weapons they had a fair supply of muskets and bayonets. The other two divisions constituted the army of the populace, ragged, lean, and haggard, — after four years of privation and of bread-scarcity, with three Revolutionary years among the four. This was the slum from which this army had come forth.

They had no guns and no uniforms. Their vests were in tatters, their blouses torn. Their odd weapons were such as they could light upon in the first wrathful impulse, at the first call for defence. There were pikes, pitchforks, rusty spears, sabres without hilts, blades fastened to long sticks, carpenters' axes, masons' hammers, shoeknives.

For a standard there was a gibbet, with a dangling puppet, to represent the Queen. There was also an ox-head, with an obscene motto interlaced with the horns; and a calf's heart stuck on the point of a spit, with the words: *Heart of an Aristocrat!*

Then there were flags with these legends:

APPROVE THE EDICTS, OR DIE!

RECALL THE PATRIOT COUNCIL!

TYRANT, TREMBLE! THY HOUR HAS COME!

At the corner of the Rue Saint Antoine the multitude split into two parts. Santerre and his National Guards marched along the boulevards, — the General wearing his uniform as battalion commander. Saint-Huruge rode a perfectly caparisoned horse, brought him by an unknown groom, and was backed by strong muscles from the market-place. Théroigne de Méricourt was couched on a cannon drawn by bare-armed men. Both these divisions went up the Rue Saint Antoine. They were all to go through Place Vendôme and reunite at the Feuillant Terrace.

For three hours this army marched along, drawing after it the population of the districts through which it passed. It was like torrents which leap and froth as they increase in volume. At each crossroad the

army grew larger. At each street corner it burst into fresh foam.

The mass of the people were silent ; but at unexpected intervals the silence was broken by loud clamors. Then they sung the famous *Ça ira* of 1793. Little by little, this had changed from a song of encouragement to one of menace. Then might have been heard the shouts : " Long live the Nation ! Hurrah for the People ! Down with Monsieur and Madame Veto ! "

Long before the vanguard of the column hove in sight, the tramp of this army could be heard, like the noise of the intrushing tide. From time to time resounded the songs, the cries, the hurrahs, as the distant tempest comes howling through the air.

With Santerre's division were the people who carried the poplar-tree, to be planted on the Feuillant Terrace. In Place Vendôme they found a detachment of National Guards barring their passage. Nothing would have been easier than for this multitude to crush this detachment in its thousand serpentine coils. But no ! The people were out on a holiday. They wished to laugh, to be amused, to terrify Monsieur and Madame Veto. They did not wish to kill anybody. The tree-bearers gave up their project of planting it on the Feuillant Terrace, and went around the palace to set it out in the courtyard of the old Capuchin Convent.

For nearly an hour the Assembly had been within earshot of the noise, when messengers came from the crowd to claim, for those whom they represented, the favor of passing in review before the National Deputies.

Vergniaud moved that the request be granted ; but at the same time he proposed to send sixty Deputies to protect the palace. Even the Girondists did not wish

harm to the King and Queen, though they were glad to give them a scare.

One of the Feuillants opposed Vergniaud's motion, on the ground that such a precaution would be insulting to the Parisians. Was this objector secretly hoping this demonstration would end in crime?

The admission was voted, and the armed populace from the faubourgs permitted to defile through the hall. The doors were soon opened, to give ingress to thirty thousand petitioners. The march began at noon and was not over till three o'clock.

The crowd had now obtained the first part of their demand. They had been admitted to the Assembly, and their petition had been read. It only remained for them to go to the King, and demand his sanction to the decrees about ecclesiastical exiles and the proposed encampment.

As the Assembly had received the deputation, would there be any valid excuse for the King's not receiving it? The King was certainly no greater lord than the President. When the King came to the Assembly, he had no better armchair than the President's, and moreover sat at his left hand!

The King expressed his willingness to receive the petition by the hands of twenty messengers. The crowd did not expect to enter the Tuileries. They believed the committee would go inside, while the crowd marched by the windows. All their banners, with the threatening mottoes, all their dismal standards, would be seen by the King and Queen through the windows.

All the gateways leading to the palace were closed. In the courtyard and in the Tuileries Garden were stationed three regiments of regular troops, two squadrons of police, several battalions of the National Guard, and

four pieces of artillery. From their windows the royal family could see this apparent protection, and appeared correspondingly tranquil.

Meanwhile the crowd, still without any evil designs, asked to have the iron grating opened which separated them from the Feuillant Terrace. The officers on guard refused to open the gate without an order from the King.

Three city officials then asked permission to go in and ask for such an order. They were allowed to do so. Montjoye, author of the "History of Marie Antoinette," has recorded their names. They were Boucher René, Boucher Saint-Sauveur, and Mouchet. Mouchet was the little Justice of the Peace from the Marais District, a crippled, misshapen, twisted dwarf, wearing a big tri-colored scarf. They were admitted to the palace and conducted to the King. Mouchet did the talking.

"Sire, a body of men are acting under the shield of the law. Their actions should arouse no uneasiness. Peaceful citizens have united in bringing a petition to the National Assembly, and wish to hold a civic banquet in commemoration of the famous oath taken in the Tennis Court, in 1789. These citizens ask permission to enter the Feuillant Terrace. Not only is the gateway closed, but a mounted cannon bars the way. We come to ask that this gateway may be opened, and that we may be accorded a free entrance."

"Monsieur," responded the King, "by your scarf I see that you are a civic officer. It is your duty to see that the laws are executed. If you judge it necessary, for the evacuation of the Assembly grounds, let the gate be opened into the Feuillant Terrace, and let the citizens go through that terrace, and out by the gates from the Courtyard of the Stables. Arrange the matter

with the Commanding General of the National Guards; and, above all, see that the public tranquillity is not disturbed."

The three city officials saluted and withdrew, accompanied by an officer, charged with the duty of confirming their statement that the order had been given by the King himself.

The grating was unlocked, and all tried to crowd through it. They were suffocating. Everybody knows how stifling it is in a crowd. The air blazes and bruises.

The iron gate leading to the Feuillant Terrace cracked like a wicker screen. The crowd breathed more freely, and dispersed themselves over the garden. Through some neglect the gate near the stables had not been opened. Finding it shut, the visitors turned aside, and marched past the National Guards, ranged like a hedge-row along the front of the palace.

Then they went out through the gate leading to the pier on the riverside. If they wished to return to their own districts, it was necessary to recross the palace grounds, through the wickets, and across Place du Carrousel.

These wickets were shut and guarded; but the rabble, squeezed, bruised, and hustled, began to grow irritable. On account of this grumbling the wickets were opened, and the crowd spread itself throughout this great square.

Then they began to recall the principal affair of the day, — the petition for the King to remove his veto; so instead of keeping on their way towards home, they remained in Place du Carrousel, — that is, within the rectangular enclosure between the walls of the Tuileries and Louvre palaces.

An hour passed. The populace grew impatient. They

might as well have gone peacefully homewards ; but this was not the plan of their leaders.

There were a few fellows who went from group to group, saying : " Stay here ! The King will do what you ask ! Don't go home without the King's sanction to those edicts, or we shall have all this work to do over again ! "

These suggestions seemed entirely reasonable ; but at the same time the visitors began to think that this famous approval was a long time on the way.

" We are hungry ! " was the general cry. The bread-famine had indeed ceased ; but there was a lack of work and money, and however low the price of bread, it cannot be had for nothing.

These people had all been up since five in the morning, many of them leaving pallets upon which they had lain down hungry the night before. They had all started out — mothers with their children, laborers with their wives — in the vague hope that the King could be persuaded to sign certain decrees, and that all would go well thereafter.

Now the King did not seem at all disposed to sanction those edicts. It was a hot day, and the people were thirsty. Hunger, thirst, and heat will even make dogs mad.

Well, these poor folks waited, and tried to borrow a little patience ; but they presently began to shake the iron gates of the palace.

A city officer came into the courtyard, and harangued the multitude.

" Citizens, this is the royal domicile, and a forcible entrance would be a violation of civic rights. The King is willing to receive your petition, but only by the hands of a score of your representatives."

So then, the commissioners for whom the crowd had waited an hour, believing them to be in the royal presence, had not yet been introduced to the King!

Suddenly a great outcry was heard from the side towards the river. Santerre and Saint-Huruge were there on their horses, and Théroigne on her cannon.

"What are you doing there in front of the grating?" cried Saint-Huruge. "Why don't you enter?"

"Sure enough," said several fellows in the crowd, "why don't we enter?"

"Can't you see the gate is fastened?" exclaimed several voices.

Théroigne leaped from her cannon. "It's loaded," she said. "Make the gate fly open with a cannon-ball!"

The cannon was brought to bear upon the gate.

"Wait! Wait!" cried two city officials. "No violence! The gate shall be opened." In fact they bore with all their might upon the crossbar, which held the two leaves of the gate together, till the bolt moved and the gate flew open.

The rabble rushed through the breach.

Do you want to know the nature of a mob, and what a turbulent torrent it may become?

Well, the mob entered. The cannon, drawn along in the rush, was dragged across the courtyard, and even rolled up the steps, till it reached the top of the stairway!

There some municipal officers were in waiting, wearing their scarfs of authority.

"What do you mean to do with that cannon?" they asked. "A piece of artillery in the King's apartments? Do you think you can get anything out of him by such violence?"

"That's true!" responded the intruders, surprised to

find they had brought the cannon there ; and they turned it around, so as to get it downstairs again. The axle was somehow jammed against the doorpost, and there it stood, with its muzzle directed against the multitude outside.

“ Well, that’s good ! ” ejaculated those who were coming in. “ Artillery in the King’s house ! ”

Not knowing how the cannon came there, or that it was Théroigne’s carriage, they believed royalty had aimed this gun at the populace.

Meanwhile, under orders from Mouchet, two men, with hatchets, were hacking and chopping the doorpost, and succeeded in splitting away one piece of it, which was lowered into the basement vestibule.

This operation — which was simply intended to liberate the cannon, and get it out of the way — sounded as if the doors were being hewn down.

Some two hundred gentlemen came hurrying to the palace, not with any hope of defending it, but believing the King’s last days had come, and holding themselves ready to die with him.

Among them were the old Marshal de Mouchy ; Monsieur d’Hervilly, a commander in the disbanded Constitutional Guards ; Acloque, commander of the battalion of the National Guards from the Faubourg Saint Marceau ; three grenadiers from the Saint Martin Battalion, who alone had remained at their posts, — Lecrosnier, Bridaud, and Gosse ; and also a man in black, who had once before hastened to expose his breast to the assassin’s bullet, — a man whose advice had always been thrust aside, yet who came forward again, in the very day of the danger he had tried to avert, to present himself as a last rampart between peril and the King. This was Doctor Gilbert.

The King and Queen, though greatly agitated by this fearful noise, became gradually used to it. It was now half-past three in the afternoon, and they hoped the end of the day would roll along as smoothly as its beginning.

The royal family were all together in the King's apartment. Suddenly the noise of the axes reached these rooms, rising above the gusty clamor, which seemed like the distant howling of the tempest.

At that moment a man rushed into the King's bedroom, exclaiming: "Sire, do not leave me! I will be responsible for your safety!"

CHAPTER XLV.

IN WHICH THE KING SEES THAT UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES ONE MAY PUT THE RED CAP ON HIS HEAD WITHOUT BEING A JACOBIN.

THIS man was Doctor Gilbert, who is only seen in our history at certain periodical distances, but is sure to appear in every great catastrophe of the immense drama which unrolls itself before us.

"Ah Doctor, is it you? What is going on?" asked the King and Queen, both at once.

"This, Sire, — that the palace is invaded; and the noise you hear is made by the populace, who demand a sight of you."

"Oh Sire, we'll never desert you!" said the Queen and Madame Elizabeth, with one breath.

"Will the King give me, for a single hour, such authority as a sea-captain has over his ship in a storm?" asked Gilbert.

"I do give it!" said the King.

At this moment Acloque, a commander of the National Guard, appeared at the door, — pale, but resolved to defend the King to the very end.

"Monsieur," exclaimed Gilbert, "here is the King. He is ready to follow you. Take care of him!" Then Gilbert added, speaking to the King: "Go, Sire, go!"

"But what of me?" cried the Queen. "I must follow my husband!"

"And I my brother!" cried Madame Elizabeth.

"Follow your brother, Madame!" said Gilbert to Madame Elizabeth; "but you, Madame, remain here!" he added, addressing the Queen.

"Monsieur —!" said Marie Antoinette.

"Sire, Sire!" cried Gilbert, "in Heaven's name, beg the Queen to trust me, or I cannot be answerable for anything."

"Madame," said Louis, "listen to Monsieur Gilbert's advice, and obey his orders if necessary!" Then he said to Gilbert: "Monsieur, will you answer for the safety of the Queen and the Dauphin?"

"Yes, Sire, or I will die with them! That is all a pilot can promise in the midst of a tempest."

The Queen tried to make one more effort; but Gilbert stretched out his arms to bar the passage.

"Madame," he said, "it is you, and not the King, who runs the greatest danger. Rightfully or wrongfully, you are blamed for the King's resistance. Your presence will expose him to danger, without shielding him. Take upon yourself the office of the lightning-rod. Turn aside the electric stroke, if you can!"

"Then let the stroke fall on me alone, and spare my children!"

"I have promised the King to save both you and them, Madame! Follow me!"

Then turning to Madame de Lamballe (who had arrived from England a month before, and from Vernon within three days, and was again as one of the royal family) and to the other ladies of the household, he said: "Follow us!"

The other ladies with the Queen were the Princess de Tarente, the Princess de la Trémouille, Madame Tourzel, Madame de Mackau, and Madame de la Roche Aymon.

Gilbert was acquainted with the interior of the palace,

and took his bearings. What he sought was a large apartment, where all the world could see and hear. This was the first task. He would put the Queen, her children, and her ladies behind some rampart, and take his own stand in front of it.

He thought of the Council Chamber, which they could reach without passing through the corridors. Fortunately it was still empty. He pushed the Queen, the children, and the Princess Lamballe into a recessed window. The minutes were so precious that there was no time for words. Already the intruders were pounding on the door.

He dragged the heavy Council table in front of the window, and his rampart was provided.

Madame Royale stood on the table beside her brother, who was seated. The Queen was behind them. Innocence was to be the defence of Unpopularity.

Marie Antoinette wished, on the contrary, to place herself in front of her children. "All is as it should be!" said Gilbert, in the tone of a general commanding a decisive movement. "Now don't stir!"

As the door was violently shaken, and he knew that there was a wave of women in that boisterous sea, he said, as he pulled back the bolts: "Enter, Citizenesses! Enter, for the Queen and her children are expecting you!"

As soon as the door was open the deluge poured in, as through a ruptured dike.

"Where's that Austrian woman? Where's Madame Veto?" cried five hundred voices.

It was an awful moment. Gilbert understood that in this decisive hour the power had escaped from the hands of the men, and passed into the hands of the women.

"Be calm, Madame!" he said to the Queen. "I need not counsel you to be gentle also!"

One woman was in advance of the others. Her hair was flying, and she brandished a sabre. She was fairly brilliant with rage, and perhaps with hunger.

"Where's that Austrian minx?" she cried. "She sha'n't die by any hand but mine!"

Gilbert took her by the arm, and led her in front of the Queen.

"Here she is!" he said.

Then the Queen said, in her sweetest tones: "Have I done you any personal wrong, my daughter?"

"None, Madame," replied the woman, astonished by Marie Antoinette's blended mildness and majesty, as well as by her beauty.

"Why do you wish to kill me, then?"

"They say you're leading the country to perdition!" stammered the confused woman, lowering the point of her sword to the floor.

"Then you have been deceived! I am the wife of the King of France. I'm the mother of the Dauphin, — this boy here! Very well! I'm a Frenchwoman, then, and shall never see my own country again. I can neither be happy nor unhappy, except in France. Alas! I was happy when you loved me!"

The Queen sighed. The young woman dropped her sabre and began to cry.

"Ah, Madame!" she said, "I did n't know you! Pardon me! I see you're a good woman."

"Keep on in this way, Madame!" whispered Gilbert, "and not only will you be saved, but in fifteen minutes all these people will be at your knees."

Leaving the Queen in the care of two or three National Guardsmen, who had just come in, and of Secretary of

War Lajard, who had entered with the crowd, Gilbert now hastened to find the King.

His Majesty had encountered a similar scene. Just as he entered the *Ceil-de-bœuf*, the door-panels were broken in, and bayonet-points, spear-heads, and axe-blades were thrust through the openings.

"Open the door!" cried the King.

"Citizens," said Monsieur d'Hervilly, in a loud voice, "you need n't smash the door. The King wishes it opened."

As he spoke, he slipped the bolts and turned the key; and the door, already half broken down, creaked on its hinges.

Monsieur Acloque and the Duke de Mouchy had barely time to push the King into the window-recess, while several grenadiers, who were there, made haste to pile some benches and chairs in front of him.

Seeing the crowd rush in with shouts and imprecations, the King could not avoid calling out: "Help, gentlemen, help!"

Four grenadiers drew their swords and placed themselves by his side.

"Put up your swords, gentlemen!" said the King. "Only stay by me! That's all I ask!"

A moment more and it would have been too late! The flash of the sabres seemed like a challenge.

A ragged fellow, with naked arms and foaming at the mouth, threw himself towards the King.

"So it's thee, is it, Monsieur Veto?" he said; and he tried to stab the King with a blade tied to the end of a stick.

One of the grenadiers, who had not yet replaced his sabre in its scabbard, despite the King's order, beat down the stick with his weapon.

By that time the King had entirely regained his composure. Pushing the grenadier aside, he said : " Allow me, Monsieur ! What have I to fear in the midst of my people ? "

Taking a step forward, with a dignity of which he hardly seemed capable, and a courage to which he had hitherto been a stranger, the King presented his breast to the weapons aimed against it.

" Silence ! I wish to speak ! " exclaimed the voice of a stentor, in the midst of the uproar.

A cannon would have tried in vain to make itself heard amidst such yells and vociferations, and yet the tumult ceased at the sound of this voice.

It was the voice of Legendre, the butcher. He approached the King near enough to touch him. A circle was formed about them.

At that moment a man appeared at the outer extremity of the circle ; and behind Danton's terrible *double*, as Legendre was called, the King saw the pale but calm face of Doctor Gilbert.

A glance from the royal eye asked the question : " What have you done with the Queen, Monsieur ? " and the Doctor's smile responded : " She is safe ! " The King thanked him with a sign.

" Monsieur," said Legendre, addressing the King.

At this title of *Monsieur*, which seemed to point a special insult, the King turned, as if he had been stung by an adder.

" Yes, Monsieur ! — Monsieur Veto ! I'm talking to *you* ! " continued Legendre. " Now listen, for it's your business to hear us ! You're a tricky fellow ! You've always cheated us, and you'll cheat us again. But look out for yourself ! Your measure is almost full, and the people are tired of being your playthings and victims. "

"Very well, I'm listening!" said the King.

"So much the better! Do you know what we're here after? We're here to demand your signature to the decrees about the priests and the camp, and also the recall of your old Councillors. — Here's our petition!"

Legendre unfolded a paper which he drew from his pocket, and recited the same threatening petition which had already been read that day to the Assembly.

The King listened, his eyes fixed on the reader. When it was finished, he said, without any emotion, — at least, any that was apparent: "I shall do, Monsieur, whatever the laws and the Constitution order me to do!"

"Oh, yes!" said a voice. "That's your great war-horse, the Constitution! — the Constitution of '91, which lets you muddle the whole machine, tie France to the whipping-post, and give the Austrians time to come and swallow us up."

The King turned in the direction of this new voice, for he understood that this meant a still graver attack.

Gilbert also made a movement, and laid his hand upon the shoulder of the last speaker.

"I have seen you before, my friend!" said the King. "Who are you?" He spoke with curiosity, rather than with fear, although the man's face bespoke a resolute and formidable character.

"Yes, you have seen me before, Sire! You have now seen me thrice, — once on your way back from Versailles, on July 16, 1789; again at Varennes, a year ago. The other time, Sire, — here! Sire, recall my name! I have a name of sinister import. They call me Billot!" (the *block*.)

At this moment the noise redoubled. A man armed with a pike tried to dart it at the King; but Billot

grasped the weapon, wrenched it from the assassin's hands, and broke it over his knee.

"No assassinations!" he said. "Only one weapon has any right to touch that man, — namely, the Law! They say there was once a King of England who had his head cut off, by the legal sentence of the people whom he had betrayed. His name should be known to thee, Louis. Don't forget it!"

"Billot!" murmured Gilbert.

"Oh, you've done well enough!" said Billot, shaking his head; "but that man will be tried as a traitor, and condemned!"

"Yes, as a traitor!" cried a hundred voices. "Traitor! Traitor! Traitor!"

Gilbert threw himself between the King and his adversaries, and said: "Fear nothing, Sire! but try, by some open act, to give these furious men a little satisfaction."

The King took Gilbert's hand, and pressed it on his heart. "You see I fear nothing!" he said. "This morning I received the holy sacrament. Let them do with me what they please! As to the outward sign you wish me to give — Well, see here! How does this please you?"

As he ceased speaking, the King snatched a red cap from the head of a sans-culotte, and placed that red cap on his own head.

The crowd broke into immediate applause. "Long live the King! Hurrah for the Nation!" shouted everybody.

One man made his way through the jam, and approached the King. In his hand this man carried a wine-bottle.

"If thou lovest the people as thou sayest, Fatty Veto,

prove it by drinking this to their health!" he said, offering the bottle to the King.

"Don't drink, Sire!" said a voice. "Perhaps the wine is poisoned!"

"Drink, Sire. I'll be responsible!" said Gilbert.

The King took the bottle. "To the health of the people!" he said, and drank the wine.

Again huzzas for the King resounded.

"Sire," said Gilbert, "you have nothing more to fear. Let me return to the Queen."

"Go!" said the King, pressing the Doctor's hand.

As Gilbert went out, Isnard and Vergniaud came in. They had come thither from the Assembly, in order to make a hedge about the King with their popularity,—and with their bodies, if need be.

"The King?" they asked. Gilbert pointed him out, and the two Deputies went towards him.

In order to reach the Queen, Gilbert had to pass through several rooms, and among others the King's bedroom. The people had taken possession of it.

"Ah ha!" said some men, sitting down on the royal bed. "Gracious! Fatty Veto has a better bed than ours!"

There was nothing alarming about this sort of talk. The first effervescence had subsided.

Gilbert tranquilly rejoined the Queen. As he entered the salon where he had left her, he threw a hasty glance about him and breathed more freely.

She was still in the same place. The little Dauphin, like his father, had donned a red cap.

A great noise arose in the next room, which drew Gilbert's attention towards the door. This noise was caused by the approach of Santerre. This colossus came into the hall.

"Oh ho ! The Austrian Woman is here, then !" Santerre exclaimed.

Gilbert crossed the hall diagonally, walked straight up to him, and said : " Monsieur Santerre ? "

Santerre turned. " Ah, it 's Doctor Gilbert ! " he cried joyfully.

" Who has not forgotten that you were one of those who opened the doors of the Bastille for him. — Let me present you to the Queen, Monsieur Santerre ! "

" To the Queen ? Present me to the Queen ? " growled the brewer.

" Yes, to the Queen ! Do you refuse ? "

" No, on my word ! " said Santerre. " I was going to present myself on my own account, but since you are here, why — "

" I know Monsieur Santerre already," said the Queen.

" I know that during the famine he fed half the Faubourg Saint Antoine ! "

Santerre paused in astonishment. Glancing in a somewhat confused way at the Dauphin, and seeing the sweat running in great drops down the little fellow's cheeks, he called to those near the table : " Take off his cap. Can't you see you 're suffocating the little chap ? "

The mother thanked him with a look.

Then leaning on the table, and bending towards her, the sturdy Fleming said, in a low voice : " You have very awkward friends, Madame. I know those who could serve you better ! "

An hour afterwards the crowd had all melted away, and the King, accompanied by his sister, entered the room where the Queen and their children were expecting him.

The Queen ran to him, and threw herself at his feet. The children grasped his hands. They all embraced one another, as might a rescued family after a shipwreck.

Only then did the King remember that he had the red cap still on his head. "Ah, I had forgotten that!" he cried; and crushing it in his hand with disgust, he threw it far away.

A young artillery officer, hardly twenty-two years old, witnessed this whole scene from outside, as he leaned against a tree on the edge of the pond. Through the windows he saw all the perils the King had encountered, all the humiliations heaped upon him. When he saw this incident of the red cap, he could no longer hold his peace.

"Oh!" he murmured. "If I only had twelve hundred men and two cannon I'd very soon relieve that poor King of all these hoodlums!"

As he had neither the twelve hundred men nor his two pieces of artillery, and as he could no longer bear the sight of this offensive spectacle, he went away.

This young officer was Napoleon Bonaparte.





